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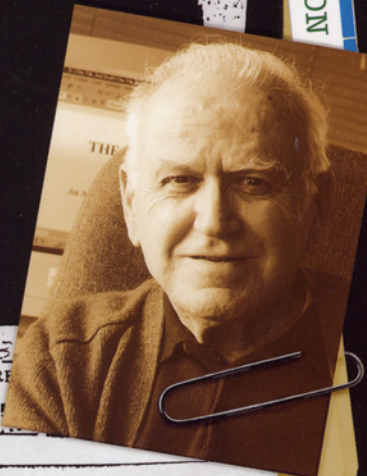
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Twenty Years

of FBI

Surveillance

BERNARD GORDON



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THE GORDON FILE

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The Gordon File

A SCREENWRITER RECALLS
TWENTY YEARS OF
FBI SURVEILLANCE

BY BERNARD GORDON

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*For all the dear friends who understood,
in the words of Abraham Lincoln Polonsky,
that someone has to fight the losing battles.*

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A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.

— JAMES MADISON, *letter to William T. Barry*, AUGUST 4, 1822

FBI files: Farce or tragedy or both?

A Note to the Reader

The file on me maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as delivered to me, is clearly a collection of reports made over a period of years. Consequently, there is no consecutive numbering of the bureau's material. You will see bottom page numbers like 1, 2, 3, and 4 occurring regularly. This indicates that the pages are part of a longer file, not all of which was offered to me. In order to give the reader ready access to my comments, I have placed numbers at the top right of each page. This is the only alteration I have made to any page of the file.

Because the pages released to me were selected and assembled in haphazard fashion by the bureau, my comments on them, which attempt to reconstruct a chronological narrative, do not follow the file pages in numerical order. Thus, a comment on page 39 of the file may precede one referring to page 3.

—THE AUTHOR

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THE GORDON FILE

President Franklin D. Roosevelt articulated the importance of a national archives at the opening of his presidential library in 1941: “To bring together the records of the past and to house them in buildings where they will be preserved for the use of men and women in the future, a Nation must believe in three things.

It must believe in the past.

It must believe in the future.

It must, above all, believe in the capacity of its own people so to learn from the past that they can gain in judgement in creating their own future.”

1. Before the Beginning

As a screenwriter and filmmaker with some twenty credits, a few of them reasonably distinguished, and as one of several hundred screenwriters and filmmakers who have FBI files hundreds of pages long, I naturally have some questions: What's so special about screenwriters, directors, and producers? Why did J. Edgar Hoover have such a passionate and persistent interest in them? My own hefty package of FBI pages, which is in a sense an official biographical review of my life, may shed some light on these conundrums. So why not start with the most basic question?

Are Communists born or made? Is it genetically transmitted or environmentally induced? Or perhaps it is Oedipal, a clear instance of wanting to overthrow the government and replace the father. But Freud is currently out of fashion. In the early pages of the file, the FBI emphasizes physical characteristics developed long before I was a Party member. Are they leaning toward the genetic? Once they get going (3), they list everything but my fingerprints, which they didn't have, and my Bertillon measurements, also unavailable. In any event, they meticulously describe me in the following terms: color: white; sex: male; height: 5'10"; weight: 130 lbs.; eyes: brown; hair: brown; complexion: light; peculiarities: wears glasses (astigmatism), scar on chin. I don't remember the scar and can't find any trace of it now, but it sounds interesting. When they get to my eye color, it brings irresistibly to mind the great line in the motion picture *Casablanca* when the lead Nazi, played by Conrad Veidt, hands Bogart a packet of documents, his full political dossier, and Bogart, after scanning the pages, looks up at Veidt and asks, "Are my eyes really brown?"

Maybe Bogart had a point. Even the FBI gets things wrong. They initially list me as having been born in New York City (2); as having lived at addresses I know nothing about in Middle Village, New York, and on Hull Avenue in the Bronx (3); and as having signed the nominating petitions for the Communist Party in 1942 and 1943. In fact, I was long gone from New York by those dates, so all of this is incorrect. I think we must start with the assumption that the FBI is not perfect.

They finally get it right and list my birthplace as New Britain, Connecticut, on October 29, 1918. This does conform to what my parents

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told me. I had also been told that this was the date of the false armistice for World War I. I have not been able to find any mention of this on the Internet, and assume it was only a happy illusion of my father's, who was glad to have his second child and first son born alive, safe from the Huns. But arriving alive was no mean trick.

When my mother was dragged unhappily to the New Britain General Hospital to give birth to me, the scene was truly frightful. The halls of the hospital were lined with coffins for the victims of the flu pandemic who were dying in unimaginable numbers. Little is said these days about the raging flu that killed at least forty million people worldwide, including two hundred thousand in October 1918 in our country. It was considered unlikely that a woman going through the stress of birthing would have much chance to resist or recover from the flu. Ergo, the coffins. But I did emerge alive, and so did she. As a result, I have been reminded on various occasions that I am here on a pass.

To pursue the genetic angle further, I had two grandfathers whom I never knew, but the stories about them make me nervous about my genes. My maternal grandfather went by the name of Dorman, which doesn't sound like the name of an Eastern European Jew, but there it is. The man was peculiar in many ways. He left his home in Lithuania at the age of thirteen or fourteen, probably to avoid the Russian military draft, knocked around the world, even working as a child in a wine-bottling plant in England where, like David Copperfield, he had to wash bottles. He became a sailor and sailed to all corners of the globe, later telling stories of his experiences in far-off ports in Australia and South America. He returned home to Lithuania long enough to marry my grandmother, and together they sailed for America. However, the bride was eight months pregnant, so that when the ship reached Liverpool, they had to disembark. My mother was born in a rooming house near the Liverpool docks.

Many years later, when I was denied a U.S. passport for political reasons, I wondered whether my mother had gained British citizenship by virtue of her birth in Liverpool and whether I would then be entitled to derivative British citizenship. But truly valuing my American citizenship, I never pursued this.

After a minimal period of recuperation, the family boarded another ship for America. My mother was only a couple of months old when she arrived in the promised land in 1892, not long after the Statue of Liberty had been erected. Emma Lazarus's poem was there to welcome

the immigrants. Her poetry may not please all the critics, but the words sang a grand concept of America, like a new Declaration of Independence: “Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free . . .”

In New York, the wandering Jew opened a barbershop in the ghetto of Manhattan and was soon successful. Part of his success was due, I was told, to his being widely known as Crazy Dorman, a man who had learned in his travels to like raw green vegetables like lettuce, unknown to the Jews from the shtetl; my mother told of his raising green vegetables in flats in the cellar because it wasn't possible then to find them in the shops. I wonder, now, how he managed to grow vegetables in the dark.

Also he kept a brilliantly colored parrot, probably an enormous macaw, the kind with jaws that can crush a coconut. The bird sat on a perch in the barbershop. To the delight of his customers, Dorman talked to the splendid creature and fed it nuts from his own lips. On one occasion, the parrot bit clear through grandpa's cheek. There was much blood. Grandpa was shocked and infuriated by this betrayal, and flung the bird with all his strength to the floor, where it lay as if dead. This was too much for him, and he lovingly picked up the bird and cooed it back to life. This may be the only time my grandfather showed any affection for another living being.

New York at the turn of the century was a wild and interesting place, already, according to H. G. Wells, the most important city in the world. It was also a place of filth, death, poverty, and disease. Thousands died every year of typhus and tuberculosis. TB, consumption, the white plague: all synonyms for a disease known to mankind for thousands of years—the ancient Greeks and Egyptians recorded its ravages—typically infecting the lungs and usually associated with crowded and unsanitary conditions. In the Jewish ghetto, a few dozen square blocks in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, more people were packed into a single square mile than in any other city of the world, twice as many as in the densest section of London.

The elevated railroads were running, first powered by steam. The subway was being built, and by 1904 it was boasted that you could ride from the Battery to Harlem in fifteen minutes. New York was not yet the financial center of the world, because Wall Street and finance capital had not yet developed, but it was an era of capital accumulation. The railroads ran across the country and ran the country; the automobile

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was being born and along with it the Rockefeller oil empire. Edison and Nicola Tesla had developed electricity to light our cities, turn our motors, and electrify our industry. America was becoming a world power, and Teddy Roosevelt intervened to help settle the war between Russia and Japan in 1905, becoming America's first Nobel Prize winner (for peace) the next year.

It was the heyday for political corruption in all the cities and states, not just at Tammany Hall in New York. Flourishing alongside the corruption were muckrakers, journalists who exposed the graft and bribery by which the new enterprises bought and paid off legislators, police, judges. Even branches of organized religion, like the Episcopal Church, spiritual guardian of the wealthy establishment, became slumlords, charging outrageous rents to immigrants forced to live ten and twelve to a room under appalling conditions.

One muckraker was Lincoln Steffens, whose autobiography I read when I was sixteen. His description of civic corruption, which boiled down to pitiless profit making by the rich and powerful, made such an impression on me that I believe it started me on the downward path that led to this Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) file.

There was not yet a Federal Bureau of Investigation. But because criminals and other undesirables were able to move from state to state to avoid prosecution, President Theodore Roosevelt began to organize a national police agency to replace the ineffective and indifferent state police. The FBI as we know it did not come into being until after World War I.

So far as I know, Grandpa Dorman was not guilty of criminal behavior or exploitation of labor. But he was a man who went his own way. A womanizer, he took advantage of his modest prosperity to ship his wife, daughter, and even the third child, a son, off to Europe on a number of summer trips to visit the old country, freeing him to play the field. By the time she was twelve, my mother had been across the Atlantic three times. On the last trip, her mother died during a typhus epidemic in Vilnius, and my mother, with three-year-old Willie in tow, returned to New York and a succession of stepmothers.

A good student in the local grade school, she had written a twelve-page letter from Europe to her teacher in New York. It was so prized that it was framed and mounted on the school wall. She dreamed of further schooling and becoming a writer. But her father could not be bothered even to attend her graduation and would not hear of sending a girl on to further education.

She soon left home, found work in one of the miserable shirtwaist factories, and supported herself. Her only sweet memory of those days is when the family dog, a German shepherd (another of Dorman's idiosyncrasies), encountered her in the street and went crazy with joy at the meeting. In 1911, my mother was seventeen, a very pretty girl working in the needle industry, when the Triangle Waist Company caught fire, trapping 500 workers, mostly young Jewish and Italian women. Two dozen men were also among the 140 people who died in the blaze. But employed elsewhere at the time, my mother was not one of them.

My paternal grandfather was altogether different. No scoundrel, no womanizer, but difficult in his own way, he was a world-class misanthrope who apparently had no use for anyone. His sad story is an old-country soap opera: Forced to divorce the wife he loved because she was infertile, he had to marry another woman he cared nothing about.

In family accounts, the heroic oldest daughter, Tillie, made her way to America from the Ukraine and settled in New Britain, Connecticut, where she slaved away for years, saving every nickel and sending for her siblings and parents one by one until the family was assembled. Grandpa, indifferent to the blandishments of the new world—apparently indifferent to everything—obtained a horse and wagon and went about the streets buying old clothes and junk, which he disposed of at a modest profit. His several younger brothers, who also settled in New Britain, became successful entrepreneurs as wholesalers of fresh produce, which they obtained from as far away as California. Their offers to help my grandfather or involve him in their business were rudely rejected. He didn't need or want help from his kid brothers. The horse and wagon remained his only capital equipment.

My father, six or seven when he arrived in New Britain, was named Hillel, the name of a fine prophet from the Hebrew Bible. When he was sent to school, he spoke no English and the teachers knew nothing about Hillel. It sounded like Willie to them, so he became William Gordon. He did all right in school and helped with the care of the horse. But like everyone else, he kept his distance from his father, who seemed to sleep not at all, but to sit up all night smoking cigarettes at the kitchen table, dropping ashes on himself, and occasionally setting himself on fire. I like to think he was brooding about his lost love.

I do know there was one moment when he behaved like a loving

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father. His son, my father, was so overcome by this event that he told it repeatedly throughout my childhood. During some school holiday, Grandpa, mysteriously moved, took a dime out of his pocket, offered it to his son, and told him to do whatever he wanted with it. There is no record of what happened to the dime, but Willie Gordon went on to New Britain High and became a baseball player. He was a catcher, and on one occasion the bat swung back too far and broke his nose. This was a proud moment. Who could be more American than a catcher who had had his nose broken by a baseball bat during a game? As a result, when we lived in the Bronx many years later, he took me to Yankee Stadium, where I saw Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and Tony Lazzeri, the Murderers' Row of the 1927 Yankees, during the greatest days of a great team.

Did I inherit more DNA from Grandpa Dorman or Grandpa Gordon? Grandpa Gordon, like Grandpa Dorman, was fond of dogs. He had a German shepherd to whom he spoke Yiddish. So, two dogs in the background. I certainly like dogs, but am indifferent to macaws. Perhaps the FBI has its own take on this. Foreigners, you know, and Russian Jews at that. Can subversion be far behind?

My father and mother met in the summer of 1913 at Orchard Beach, a small Connecticut resort town on Long Island Sound, where they had each gone independently to spend the summer. Along with other friends, they arranged to operate an ice cream parlor and live all together in a large old house. To avoid unwanted and unjustified gossip, they pretended that my mother was my father's sister. Ergo, she assumed the name Gordon. She was both a beauty, as a photo I have of her proves, and a girl who won all the dance contests. I am told that there was a popular national entertainer at the time named Kitty Gordon. As a result, it was decided that my mother should also be known as Kitty Gordon. My father, fresh from New Britain, fell madly in love with the glamorous girl from the big city. After the summer he pursued her to New York, and they were married in 1914. Incidentally, that summer a popular song was "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles." This became my parents' signature song, which I heard in the cradle. It didn't matter that I could never carry a tune. I still love that song.

They settled in New Britain.

By 1921, my mother had decided there was no future in such a backwater, and she persuaded my father to move to the big city, where my father, with the help of friends, opened a hardware store at Thirtieth

Street and Seventh Avenue in the heart of the fur district. This store became very much a part of my life for almost twenty years, and I barely managed to escape becoming a hardware merchant and make my contributions to the art of film.

. . . the FBI [i]s a national police force. The Bureau should be in the business of catching criminals. It should be removed, once and forever, from the business of monitoring citizens' political beliefs . . . As a political police, mobilized to protect the interests of any political establishment, it is an affront to the basic rights of free speech and association and an insult to the letter and the spirit of the Constitution.

ROSS GELSPAN, *Break-ins, Death Threats, and the FBI: The Covert War against the Central America Movement*, 1991

2. Innocence and Pain

By 1922 we had settled in an apartment on 25th Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan, only five blocks from my father's new hardware shop. It was a time of Prohibition, growing gang crime, and the rise of J. Edgar Hoover to chief of the newly named Federal Bureau of Investigation. Hoover early became a master of public relations and, rightly or wrongly, gained credit for battling rumrunners like Al Capone and bank robbers like John Dillinger, charismatic criminals who made the era so colorful.

If I had any latent criminal tendencies before I was four, they are lost in early family history. My principal misbehavior arose at the age of four when my sister, seven, was sent around the corner to Public School (P.S.) 24. I was outraged that I was to be left alone at home and kicked up such a fuss that my mother pleaded with the school officials to admit me to kindergarten. I was a year too young for that, but my persistence and hers prevailed, and I was admitted to Ms. McGlocklin's class. As a kindergarten student, I did okay, but after the first semester, instead of being promoted to first grade with my classmates, I was held back, at age four and a half, for another term in kindergarten. I swallowed this rather gracelessly and spent another term with Ms. McGlocklin. Even then, I was still under five, and it was still impossible to get promoted to first grade. I quit school and became, possibly, the youngest school dropout in New York history.

After a painfully boring few months at home, I yielded to authority and returned to kindergarten for a third term. By now, I was quite an expert with crayons and blocks. There were other signs of precocity. Like most boys of that era, I early became car crazy, and I would walk with my mother the five blocks along Seventh Avenue, between the store and home, calling out the brand of every car we passed: Ford, Chevy, Buick, Nash, Studebaker, Packard, Hupmobile, Pierce Arrow. My mother thought this was brilliant and boasted of my accomplishments.

By the end of my fourth term in kindergarten, I was still several months too young to enter first grade in September. By now, the school was thoroughly fed up with having me in kindergarten and broke the rule, permitting me to begin my formal education. Because of this early start and all of the later grade skipping that was then encouraged by the school system, I graduated from high school when I was about fifteen

and entered City College before I was sixteen, even as I had entered first grade before I was six.

However, those early years were colored by something more serious than crayons. I was four when my mother was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Had this terrible lung disease been lurking inside since her ghetto years, waiting to break out? I can still recall the consternation in the household when the diagnosis was made and the family had to decide what to do. Did I understand then that she might die? I think so. At least the uncertainty and upset that besieged the household surely had an effect.

The only known treatment then was rest and recuperation in clear mountain air, as in the Adirondacks or in Switzerland. It was a form of warehousing the ill, who might linger in relative comfort, though they died more often than they recovered. The less affluent New York Jews had to settle for the nearby Catskill Mountains. My mother went to a small hotel in Fallsburgh, New York. This was a center of the “Borscht Circuit” that spawned all the great Jewish comedians.

My father, trying to make a go of his hardware store, now had to worry about paying for my mother’s care and arranging for the care of two young children. The latter was solved for the moment by having my grandmother come from New Britain. I wish I could remember this as a warm and happy solution. It wasn’t. Grandma had raised five children in a poverty-stricken home with an unloving, misanthropic husband. She did not feel it was fair to ask her to take on another family. Attached as I was to an overprotective mother, I felt abandoned. I hated Grandma, and I know the feeling was mutual.

My mother returned after three months. She was “better,” not cured. At that time, there was no cure. For the next sixteen years, life with mother was very iffy. She would go away, she would return. She was never well. The threat of her dying always lay heavily on our heads and hearts.

Still, at the ages of four, five, and six, I managed a fairly normal child’s life. In addition to school there were visits to the hardware store, which always delighted me. And at that time they were excavating all along Eighth Avenue for a new subway system. The avenue below our street was riven with tunnels we were forbidden to enter, so of course we entered them all the time and played games there. At the Chelsea Theater, just around the corner on Eighth Avenue, I first fell in love with movies and grand stars like Hoot Gibson and Tom Mix. Tom Mix was the bigger name, but Hoot Gibson was my favorite.

When the Chelsea became a burlesque theater, there was considerable scandalized talk among the adults, which I listened to with interest. All the talk came to a smashing end when the police raided the place and, as the story went, “herded all the girls into the paddy wagon dressed in nothing but rouge.” There I was, living practically next door, and I missed the best scene of my life. What would a girl “dressed in nothing but rouge” look like? My imagination ran wild.

With the hardware store prospering modestly during those boom years of the 1920s and my mother’s health seemingly stable, we moved to the Bronx, along with all the other lower-middle-class Jews of New York. By the time I was ten or eleven, I was working regularly in the store on Saturdays and summer holidays. I look back on those times with a certain astonishment. My mother’s intermittent absences meant that my sister and I were much on our own.

Over the years the hardware store became a kind of home away from home for me, as it was for my father. I presided over the cash register. I made keys for customers and even learned how to change the combinations of cylinder locks. I made cords for the electric irons used by the furriers and repaired the irons themselves. In summer, I made simple repairs on electric fans. I frequently dragged deliveries to customers in the neighboring buildings and even by subway to different parts of town. I enjoyed selling nails to the furriers, especially the fine, needle-sharp nails used to pin down skins to boards for stretching. I learned to reach into the bin, pull out a handful, and dump them into the tray of the hanging scale. I was proud when my first handful would come out to exactly one pound and the customer would grin appreciatively.

This was a strictly male emporium. I don’t recall a single woman ever coming in as a customer. There was always rough humor from the mechanics and electricians who sometimes came in to purchase items known as male and female nipples, or male and female plugs. Of course, I took satisfaction in knowing about male and female parts. My sister, three years my senior, never came to help out in the shop because this was no place for a dazzling blonde little girl. In any case, she and I went our separate ways from the beginning, for reasons I have never understood, except that apparently she was daddy’s girl, and despite working in the hardware store, I belonged to mother.

My father did not participate in coarse banter with the customers. He wasn’t stiff-necked, but he was very much the boss, and focused on business. A well-built man to begin with, he had put on a great deal of weight, which he carried well. Physically and temperamentally, he

seemed right for his role. I regret that I don't recall any real warmth between us, but I do cherish some moments. On winter Saturdays during the Depression, on those bitterly cold mornings, we got up in the dark at home, and took the subway downtown. He read the *Daily News*. I just sat and dozed. Exiting at 32nd Street, we would walk the couple of blocks to the store. In those days, we passed a church on 31st Street, and there was always an endless line of men curling down the street, muffled against the cold, waiting for a handout of coffee and a bun. Young as I was, this sight troubled me, not only for the misery of the men, but also because I felt that none of us was secure. Would I some day wind up on such a line? How to guarantee against that? But, for the moment, I was safe with my father, who would stop with me at the steaming cafeteria across the street from the store so I could order a breakfast of scrambled eggs and, sometimes, bacon. Pork was not permitted at home, even though we were not a religious household.

My father clearly took pleasure in my delight. I recognized that, and felt satisfied when we crossed the street, unlocked the door, and entered the frigid store.

During the hard years following 1929, a long day at the store might result in a total take of less than fifteen dollars, not enough to pay the rent. In order to survive, and perhaps because my father enjoyed beating the game, he regularly misrepresented merchandise to justify charging higher prices. For example, we sold to the furriers blades that fit into their special knife handles; the blades, something like pointed razor blades, were used for delicate work on mink skins. They had to be very sharp and reliable. Well, we had two grades, the regular ones, ten cents apiece, or the blue blades, fifteen cents. I can confess now that there was absolutely no difference between them, except that the blue blades had a blue wash over them. They actually cost us less because we sold more of them. When the furriers came in and asked me for blades, they might bitch and say that they saw no difference. There I was, age ten or eleven, knowing the truth, unable to be truthful, and uncomfortable about lying, so I merely said that the choice was theirs. More often than not, the customer would grudgingly buy the blue blades because he wanted to be certain that he had the best tools to work with.

Was this my introduction to capitalism? I don't recall reading anything in Marx about blue blades. Perhaps it was plain old mercantilism, a phase that preceded capitalism, a time when the farmer traded cabbages for potatoes and didn't necessarily tell the whole truth and noth-

ing but the truth about his produce. And then, of course, there's the fine old Latin expression, *caveat emptor*, proving that even in ancient Rome buyers had to be wary. My father might have been less pleased with himself if he had known that the system went back so many centuries. In any case, it marked me. To this day, whether I am buying dry cereal, aspirin, an automobile, or, of course, razor blades, I refuse to believe that a fifteen-cent item is better than one for ten cents.

All through this, the family lived a curious double life. It was forbidden to tell anyone that my mother suffered from tuberculosis. There was such dread of the disease that we would have been shunned and isolated. Lies were concocted to explain her absences, and I believe that somehow this continual forced deceit was hateful and injurious. At home, the strictest sanitation was enforced regarding dishes and whatever. And there was very little physical contact with my mother, certainly no kissing on the mouth.

During the boom years of the 1920s, which I liken to the 1990s, the furriers prospered and so did the hardware store. We even bought a Buick, of which I was inordinately proud. My mother learned to drive—sort of. But, of course, at the age of eight, I picked up on the lessons much sooner than she. As a result, she never drove the car unless I was beside her and could tell her when to shift. And like everyone else we knew, my father invested all his savings in the stock market. I can recall hanging around in the shop and listening to customers, usually working people, talk about their investments.

There was little evidence of local crime, but exciting stories came from Chicago about Al Capone and the mobsters. In 1929 there was the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. The cornering and killing of John Dillinger was partly an FBI operation because Dillinger had crossed state lines, but the stories of how Dillinger had repeatedly escaped capture and made the FBI look foolish did not come out until many years later.

Obviously the FBI was not surveilling me in my childhood or even later while I was still in New York, and their references to me in those days come from several different sources and were collected later. The physical description of me clearly comes from the draft board (1, 2), but the information about my New York employment and work in films, which appears early in the file, could have come only from an informer, surely an intimate of some kind in Hollywood. I have a good lead as to who that may be, and I will discuss this in detail when I describe my life in California.

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.

MARK TWAIN, *Following the Equator*, 1897

3. Crash, Bang, No Boom

The 1920s began with a bang. In January, Attorney General Mitchell Palmer had six thousand “terrorists,” i.e., members of the Communist Party, arrested and jailed. Since the party was a legal entity against which no crimes had been alleged, what had happened to habeas corpus and the rule of law? Well, in May the courts finally ordered the prisoners released. But anticommunist hysteria in this country had truly begun.

The totally corrupt, decayed, and impotent government of czarist Russia had simply fallen apart under the onslaught of the German army in World War I. Lenin had moved in and assumed power. Now the Reds were eyeing the possibility of such a takeover in the much more interesting industrialized society of defeated and prostrate Germany. Foolish as it seems, the American establishment was terrified that our strong, stable society would fall victim to Communism, even though the organized Communists were a pathetically small and powerless group. J. Edgar Hoover was still a young assistant in the Justice Department, but I will bet that he learned then and there the public uses of a demonized political minority.

At the age of two I was too young to speculate about the meaning of all this. But since then, I have wondered how the history of the twentieth century might have changed if things had been handled differently. The Western powers sent troops into Russia (including an American force to Siberia) to help the Whites overthrow the Communists. After this failed, they isolated the Soviets for almost a generation with the Cordon Sanitaire and strangled them economically. That policy justified the creation of a militarized society led by a brutal and autocratic dictator, Stalin. How would the century have been different if, instead, America and the rest of the West had accepted the new social order? Stalin? Hitler? World War II? The Cold War? Vietnam? Would there have been as many miles of files about people like me in the caverns of Washington?

Not everything was dreary. Babe Ruth was sold by the Boston Braves to the Yankees for a record \$125,000. Ask the fans in Boston how different things might have been except for this bum deal.

The movies were coming of age—or perhaps it was just adolescence—but exciting new experimental styles were appearing. The German film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* caused stir and controversy in all countries. It was followed by major innovative productions like Fritz

Lang's *Metropolis*. But from the beginning, Hollywood seemed determined to go its own box-office-driven way, and caused its own commotion with the first Rin Tin Tin film in 1922, followed by triumph when Rin Tin Tin became the top box office draw of 1926.

It was certainly a lively time. Mussolini and the fascists had taken over in Italy, but our government did not seem troubled by it. There were no raids and no roundups of domestic fascists. The year 1921 was memorable both for the introduction of the Trojan condom and for the ratification of the 19th Amendment, which, at long last, gave American women the right to vote. In 1922 James Joyce's *Ulysses* was banned in Massachusetts, and the customs service prohibited the importation of the book. Another cultural icon, the "Little Orphan Annie" comic strip, appeared. No controversy there. I do recall that as soon as I was able to read, Annie and Daddy Warbucks became daily fare for me. No doubt I learned to like rich and powerful men like Warbucks and deplore his frequent disappearances. Perhaps *Ulysses* would have been less damaging.

Henry Ford introduced the eight-hour, five-day work week to slow down overproduction of his Model T. But the really big national sensation was the arrival of *The Jazz Singer* and sound movies. Everyone had to see and hear this new marvel, and I was taken to a theater on Broadway, perhaps the splendid new movie palace, the Capitol, to see it. This was in 1927. All of us, even the children, sat in awe, watching words spoken and sung come out of Al Jolson's lips. How did they do that?

Of more significance, though not yet understood, was the activity on the New York Stock Exchange. On March 26, 1929, the market set a new record when 8,200,000 shares were traded. It seemed the boom would never end. It did. October 24th saw the first serious decline in the market's value.

October 29, 1929, made a real impression on me. This was my eleventh birthday. I don't recall whether any celebration was planned; I don't even recall whether my mother was at home or away. I do recall hearing in the streets that the market had crashed after 16,400,000 shares had been traded. The market seemed to have reached an absolute bottom. But who could tell? It was the beginning of the end. My father arrived home thoroughly crushed. He had lost all his savings, \$30,000, which had been invested in gilt-edged securities. It may be an exaggeration, but my sense is that I never saw my father smile again.

And then there were the events of December 31, 1929. My mother was away once again at the Elm Shade Hotel in Fallsburgh. My father and I boarded the New York Central train for the ride to the mountains

to visit her. Already in a grim mood, he glanced down at my upturned foot and saw that there was a hole in the sole of one of my shoes. He was furious. My mother would see the shoe, start to worry that no one was taking care of me, blame him, and so on. Why hadn't I done something about this? Though he was never abusive, he could be intimidating. Claiming to be a six footer, he stretched matters an inch or two. Even so, he was considerably larger than I.

Well, I couldn't very well repair my shoe on the New York Central, so I turned my attention to other important matters. While reading the *New York Daily News*, I was struck forcibly by the realization that the date, December 31, 1929, signaled a truly historic moment. It would never again be the 1920s, the only decade I had ever been aware of. My father could not be diverted by this arcane observation. So I brooded alone on the magic and mystery of this moment in time that would never recur. Years later, when the world made such a fuss over the passing of the twentieth century, I observed it disinterestedly. Nothing was as meaningful for me as that moment on the train, on the cusp of 1930.

I don't pretend that at the age of eleven I had a premonition, but it is certainly true that the 1930s changed everything—in America, in the world, and in my life. Only a few years later I even began to wonder if our economic system (I learned it was called capitalism) was a valid system that would survive. I was not alone.

By the early 1930s, the country was really in terrible shape: mass unemployment, the failure and closing of businesses, families evicted heartlessly from their homes, breadlines crowded with hungry and dispirited men, banks failing, and depositors losing every cent of their savings. There was no depositor insurance, and no recourse. President Herbert Hoover tried to solve the problem with psychological pep talk about an imminent turnaround, recalling his campaign slogan of a “chicken in every pot.” But Hoover failed to tackle the real economic problems we faced. One grimly humorous sign of the times: the tin-and-cardboard shantytowns that sprang up everywhere were called “Hoovervilles.” A big one emerged in Central Park, where I saw homeless families huddling for shelter. Other atrocities made even a thirteen-year-old wonder about the country and the world, like the case of the Scottsboro “boys,” nine Negro youths who had been riding the rails and were accused of raping two white women in Alabama. They were tried and convicted without having been given the chance to hire a defense attorney, and eight of them were sentenced, and almost hanged, but for the intervention of leftists and Communists who eventually won a reversal.

In 1932 Franklin Roosevelt was elected, and initiated energetic programs to cope with the economic collapse. I was in the hardware store the day the bank holiday was declared. All the banks were closed, and a reorganization was promised.

But a boy, and many grown-ups, witnessed other things, too. Only a few blocks from our store, at 34th Street and Fifth Avenue, the tallest skyscraper in the world, the Empire State Building, was going up. By the time it was ready to open in 1931, it was an economic disaster. Who now needed more millions of square feet of office space in downtown Manhattan? But I wasn't concerned about the economics. I went up to 34th Street and watched in open-mouthed wonder as the incredible workmen walked the steel beams hundreds of feet above the street, tossing and catching red hot rivets. They never missed. Right or wrong, the story was that they were Mohawk Indians who just naturally had incredible skills and daring. It was better than the circus, and much more thrilling. For a year or so, I watched the building go up, and somehow it became my skyscraper. I have always loved it, and still do. It remained New York's tallest tower for about forty years, until eclipsed by the World Trade Towers. Now, since the tragic events of September 11, it is once again the city's tallest.

By now I, along with almost ten thousand others, was a student at De Witt Clinton High School, an all-boys school where lessons went on in spite of everything. I was an average student, good in some subjects, not in others, and I almost flunked Latin, which was required for graduation. But I was good in history, especially European History, which was taught by Mr. Bernstein. Later I heard mutterings that he was a Communist, which may have been true, because he had some original and provocative lessons to teach us. I recall a couple of them because I was his favorite student, the one who challenged him. For example, at one point he said that since the Great War of 1914–1918 there had not been a single year without war somewhere in the world. This seemed impossible to us. I didn't believe it. The teacher made me go back to the books and find that he was right. Somewhere in the world a war was always in progress. Bernstein explained that capitalism was the reason. Then, when we were studying the French Revolution he stated that the bourgeoisie would rather lose their lives than their property. The bourgeois were people of the class whose money came from businesses, investments, land, anything but their labor. This was too much even for a little incipient Red like me. But the more I thought about it and the more I understood my own father's mood and situation, the more I

was inclined to believe that he was downcast and hopeless because the calamity of losing his position as an entrepreneur with his own shop and being forced to find a job as an underpaid clerk in someone else's shop was absolutely unbearable. Maybe Mr. Bernstein had a point.

I really struck pay dirt in history when the phrase “intellectual honesty” appeared in one of our texts: One of the other boys asked Bernstein just what that meant. Bernstein looked around, eyed me, and said, “Bernie will tell you.” I pondered this a moment, stood up, and said, “Mr. Bernstein, to be intellectually honest, I don't know.” My first *bon mot*. I think that got me an “A” in European History.

Outside Mr. Bernstein's classroom, Roosevelt was igniting radical programs to drag us out of the Depression, like the NRA (National Recovery Administration), the WPA (Works Progress Administration)—which provided work for the unemployed—a new banking act, and others. In Europe, where Mussolini had consolidated his power, the concept of fascism was becoming familiar, and seemed threatening to many of us. More urgently, Hitler was gaining strength, and his voice was being heard not only by millions of hungry and desperate people in Germany, but far and wide. Hitler's message: the Jews were responsible for Germany losing the war, for the worldwide Depression, and for all other miseries. This message was picked up, of course, by others in the United States, including Father Coughlin, a Catholic priest with one of the most popular radio broadcasts in the country, who provided American echoes of Hitler's anti-Semitic ranting. Henry Ford, a dedicated anti-Semite, financed a newspaper that propagated the vicious and fraudulent *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a calumny fabricated in the old Russia that said Jews drank the blood of Christian virgins and had plans to take over the entire world. Ford had written a 1921 pamphlet, “The International Jew: The World's Foremost Problem,” and other anti-Jewish articles admired by Adolph Hitler. In 1938, the year before World War II began, Hitler awarded Ford the Grand Cross of the German Eagle, the highest honor the Nazis bestowed on foreigners. Ford, of course, accepted. For the first time in my life, being a Jew began to seem to be a problem. And for the first time it seemed that all of the pressing social problems that engulfed us required thoughtful consideration and answers.

But at thirteen and fourteen, I was far from weighed down by such matters. I had other interests. Principally, I had become passionately interested in photography, and spent as much time as possible wandering around New York taking pictures, then developing and printing them,

first with primitive equipment in a darkened bathroom and later in the high school darkroom, which, blessedly, had a real enlarger I could use. Joined by one or two like-minded friends, I followed this pursuit until it became virtually my way of life, which led me along a circuitous path to Hollywood and other misdemeanors.

At home, my mother's condition continued to worsen. She submitted to every known method of cure then available, including the very unpleasant if not brutal pneumothorax process. Through a large needle inserted between the ribs, air under pressure was pumped into the space between the pleural membrane and the lung, deliberately collapsing that lung so that it could rest and gain strength to fight off the disease. This procedure was repeated at regular intervals to keep the lung collapsed. Whether this theoretically elegant system ever helped anyone, I don't know. But years of it did not help my mother. She continued to require morphine shots. Since doctors and nurses were not readily available to administer the shots, and since both my sister and father were too squeamish, the doctor taught me to do it. I was the one who went to the pharmacy with the prescription for the morphine, sterilized the needle, filled the syringe, and injected the solution into her arm. She always claimed that I was the only one who made this painless, better even than the doctor. I took pride in this. It began to fulfill her fantasy that I would study hard, become a doctor, and be the one to discover a cure for tuberculosis and save her life. This was, of course, a troubling burden. Regrettably, it did not work out that way.

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When a whole nation is roaring Patriotism at the top of its voice,
I am fain to explore the cleanness of its hands and purity of its heart.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON, *Journals*, 1824

4. An Education and a Half

On graduation from De Witt Clinton, I had to consider which college I might enter. My parents wanted me to attend Columbia University (still thinking of pre-med). Though I didn't believe I was headed that way academically or professionally, I applied to Columbia and was granted an interview. Then, in spite of my good grades, I was turned down. We attributed this to the well-known fact that the school had a quota for Jews, even though New York City had a large Jewish population—or maybe because of that. I was annoyed but not unhappy. I had believed that the cost of tuition was more than my family could manage and that I would be freer to follow my own desires at the City College of New York (CCNY), which was considered a distinguished academic school at the time—the Harvard for poor kids. Although it was a tuition-free school, open to all, one had to have a good overall grade average from high school to qualify for entrance. My 85 (B+) was good enough.

I entered college in September 1933, a lively time in the history of the country, the world, and CCNY. Roosevelt's economic programs, though they hadn't ended the Depression, gave people hope and gave many people jobs, often as construction workers building post offices and other public works all over the country. The WPA also employed writers, playwrights, painters, musicians, actors, documentary filmmakers—every category of cultural worker. The pay was minimal, but it allowed one to live and retain one's self-respect. This mass employment of artists developed into a genuine cultural renaissance in America, right in the midst of our worst Depression.

In the wider world, Hitler gained power in Germany and started to flex his military muscle, demanding the return of the Saar industrial valley; Mussolini was publicly planning a new Roman empire that would start with the conquest of Ethiopia; in Spain, a socialist government had been installed, and though it soon fell, democracy had been established there for the first time. And under Franklin Roosevelt, the United States finally recognized the Soviet Union and established diplomatic relations with it. This was not accomplished without great resistance from those on the right, who vilified Roosevelt as a Communist. But he had broad shoulders. He was already being damned as a Jew by the Nazis in Germany and here at home. Some of us felt it wasn't such a bad idea having a Jew as president, even if he was a goy.

CCNY seemed like the political heart of all this. During my very first week there, the freshman class was assembled in the impressive Great Hall to start our orientation to school. The school president, Frederick Robinson, had evidently thought it would be good for us to hear and honor a group of students from fascist Italy. Our own student leadership was horrified, and threatened a riot. Robinson compromised. If we would permit the Italians to be presented and to speak, then our student president would also have his turn at the microphone.

But when the student president started to speak, he turned to the Italians, commiserated with them for the kind of country they represented, and proceeded to lecture them on the evils and brutality of the Mussolini dictatorship. Before he could get very far, furious faculty members on the stage tried to wrest the microphone away, and a battle royal erupted when some of the other radical students mounted the stage to support their president. Freshmen seated in the auditorium watched all this with fascination. Our orientation to college? Surely not what President Robinson had had in mind. I suppose that considering my eventual political intimacy with the FBI, this wasn't a bad start.

The student leaders were all expelled despite protest strikes on campus against such action. The New York police were always in evidence during student demonstrations. They carried shotguns. I still didn't know or care enough to get involved, but my sympathies were clear. The student chant during the demonstrations was: "Cops off the campus!" If the police were there, could the FBI be far behind?

Indeed, though the FBI was not behind me or on top of me at the time, they eventually caught up and noted repeatedly in their files on me (2, 37) that I attended CCNY; the date I graduated; even what I studied (41). Though it was no secret where I attended school, I find it interesting that they went to the trouble to run all this down and report it. Where did it all begin? When and how did they discover this significant information? Most interesting is the notation entered on my birthday on October 29, 1962: "NYO [New York Office] will review the records of City College of NY, for any new pertinent information pertaining to the subject or his associates while he attended that school" (57). What were they digging for? I can certainly make a guess. I learned only in recent years that Julius Rosenberg, the man who was executed, along with his wife, for being an atomic spy, also attended CCNY at that same time. It is true, according to the records, that he majored in engineering, which probably set him apart from plain old B.S. students like me. I never met the man or had any awareness of him. But how, given the police-state

mentality that pursued me so relentlessly for so many years, could I ever have proven my “innocence”? Fortunately, I never had to. The FBI, in all its wisdom, probably concluded that I was not a good enough student of physics to learn how to make an atomic bomb. Further, the record will show that I almost flunked differential calculus.

I had entered into a close friendship as far back as my sophomore year in high school with a fellow student, Julian Zimet. Our friendship continued through college, on into our professional careers, and, I’m happy to say, to this very day. Julian shared my interest in photography. We learned of a photo club in downtown Manhattan where, for a monthly fee of fifty cents, we could use their darkroom. This was the Film and Photo League.

At first we didn’t realize this was a decidedly left-wing group, not officially related to the Communist Party, but close. We didn’t much care. We got to use the darkroom, which at night was used as a bedroom by one of the comrades, who slept on one of the tables. Mostly, the league was devoted to radical young photographers who were out in the streets recording the struggles of the poor and homeless to survive the crushing Depression. The members’ work was usually posted on the walls of the shabby premises. A typical shot was of a derelict stooping to pick a cigarette butt up out of the gutter.

Part of the fee for belonging was to attend the lectures and educationals held in the meeting room, where a rickety 16 mm machine projected class-conscious documentary footage onto a bedsheet screen. On one occasion, though, we were warned to be ready for action. We were told to gather before a movie theater in the Yorkville area of Manhattan, which was the center of the German-American population. The neighborhood even featured *bierstuben* where you could get a hearty German meal with good beer. Of course, it was also known as a Nazi hangout. The movie theater there was screening German—i.e., Nazi—films, and we were going to picket the place to protest. True, there was a chance that Nazi thugs would move in and try to beat us up, but that was a chance good progressives had to take.

I was not looking forward to this encounter, but I didn’t feel I could chicken out. By this time Hitler’s brutal anti-Semitism was well understood, and I did feel I had to do my part. However, I was troubled by something else. I raised my hand for permission to speak.

“Why,” I asked, “do we feel it’s right to picket the showing of Nazi films, when we are happy that all the Soviet films—Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovchenko, and others—are running at the Acme Theater

on 14th Street?” The man who was conducting the session landed on me as if had just betrayed myself as a counterrevolutionary.

“How can you even dare to raise such a question?” he demanded. I feared my days with a free darkroom had ended. Of course, he was a fool: he needed only to explain that he was not advocating censorship, that we were merely exercising our right to make a public protest and that others had the right to picket the Acme. But, no, evidently such questioning was out of order, and I slunk away.

We did gather at the theater in Yorkville, and to my relief our picketing was not accompanied by any violence. In addition to disliking the idea of having my head broken, I had wondered what would be the reaction at home if there were a public brouhaha and my name appeared in the police reports in the *Daily News*. However, this anxiety was swept aside by another, quite unexpected development. My father, learning that I was going down to the Film and Photo League, ordered me to stop.

“Why?” I asked.

“It’s a rotten Commie outfit, and if you insist on continuing, I’ll throw you out of the house.”

I really wasn’t afraid of this threat. Such things weren’t done among people we knew. But I was curious about how he knew the league was left wing, how he knew anything about it. It wasn’t likely he had read or heard anything about it in the *Daily News*. But this didn’t seem like an opportune time to question him.

I was able to keep my self-respect and not yield to his threat because my interest in the league and in still photography waned. I drifted away. I had been introduced to the great Russian filmmakers and other classic films at the New School for Social Research. My passion evolved from still photography to film. Though the FBI seems to have missed my early exposure to radicalism at age sixteen, I’ll wager that the Film and Photo League features prominently in their files.

For Julian and me, the academic features of college were a sidebar. We disliked dissecting frogs in biology, conjugating verbs in Spanish, and even the great Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* left us bemused. We were interested in films. We went to every foreign film and every old classic we could find: the great French films of the period: *Poil de Carotte* by Duvivier, René Clair’s *Sous les Toits de Paris*, a bit later *Port of Shadows* with Jean Gabin as well as Jean Renoir’s incomparable *Grand Illusion* and *Rules of the Game*; great German films like Lang’s *M*; and the Russian films: *Battleship Potemkin*, *Mother*, *Ten Days That Shook the World*. Screenings every Saturday night at the New School supplemented what

didn't run in the theaters, where in addition there were documentary films like Ralph Steiner's *H₂O* and the marvelous little left-wing satire *Pie in the Sky* with Elia Kazan—as an actor. The endless feast inspired two young would-be filmmakers.

In addition to our disdain for academics, we were equally indifferent to campus political activities. The basement of the main building contained the cafeteria where meager sandwiches like cheese on white bread cost fifteen cents. Surrounding the cafeteria counters were deep alcoves, each reserved, informally but inviolably, for its regular students: the Catholic club members, the Jewish society, the students who worked on the college humor magazine, and so forth. The alcove that is remembered historically was labeled “The Kremlin” because that was where the YCL (Young Communist League) gathered. Nearby were the alcoves for the enemies: the Socialists and the Trotskyites. Loud vocal battles often ensued.

Although it is true, as it was so often asserted, that CCNY was a breeding ground for radicalism, that is really too narrow a concept. If radicalism was rampant, the nature of the stressful times must also be remembered. The Spanish Civil War was being fought. We were on the side of the Republican government and against Franco's fascists, who were supported by Germany and Italy. Only the Soviets made any effort to help the Republicans. I didn't know any who did, but many young Americans went to Spain to fight and die with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. We may have been obsessed with films, but we were not indifferent to this ongoing struggle. We felt it was the forerunner of a coming war with Hitler. I believe that the Spanish war had a great effect on the political thinking of many young people. It certainly did on me.

In addition to radical politics, the school is known for its scientists, intellectuals, artists, and many distinguished alumni, including eight Nobel laureates, the most of any public institution, as well as other leading citizens like Justice Felix Frankfurter of the Supreme Court, Colin Powell, and artists like George Gershwin and Paddy Chayevsky.

If there was no alcove for Nobelists, neither was there one for cine-maniacs. Julian and I couldn't arrange that. This was a time before every other college and university in the United States boasted a cinema department. We did the next best thing. We started the Film and Sprockets Society and organized a film course that was attended for five sessions at the school theater by over a thousand students and outsiders. We wrote a booklet, “The Technique of the Film,” although neither of us had ever touched a film camera. We wrote program notes. We obtained films from

the Museum of Modern Art, which was just organizing its own film department. Our course became a great success, attended by all the major newspaper critics and reported in the *New York Times* as well as the other journals. It really amounted to one of the very first film-studies courses at any school.

Exhilarated by this success and knowing that we were surely headed for Hollywood, Julian and I begged, borrowed, and begged some more to get a 16 mm camera and film, one roll at a time, and then wrote, directed, acted in, and edited a film of our own. It is still embarrassing, almost seventy years later, to realize how overconfident, foolish, downright silly we were. We were not content to try our hands at a simple documentary or a short episode. No. We would make a feature film. Sound was out of the question, and, anyway, the book by Pudovkin (*Film Technique*) sneered at sound and subtitles. Films were strictly a visual medium. The story must be told only in visual images. But, hey, we had written a “book” on the technique of the film and program notes on many classics. We had read what literature was then available by Paul Rotha and others. What more did we need to know?

Though still students, for the next two years, during summer vacations and whenever else we could steal time and promote another roll of film, we worked on our opus. It was to be our key to a Hollywood career. The story was about a brother and younger sister who are very close until the boy meets a girl his own age and falls in love. Then he neglects the kid sister, who is devastated, and so on. Not a story, I realize in retrospect, that lent itself to telling without words. We titled it “Permit a Child to Join,” borrowing literary panache from the poem by Emily Dickinson.

Julian played the leading man. His young sister, Judy, was the young sister, and his older sister, Nina, was the love interest. I was behind the camera, which had only a single medium-focal-length lens, and I set up shots and called out orders like DeMille or Eisenstein. But Julian was not content to be merely an actor and constantly argued every decision with me. I suppose, in all candor, he deserves codirector credit, according to the rules of the Directors Guild of America (DGA).

We screened the film for the Art Department that had indulgently given us class credit over several semesters in deference to our creative work. The professors and department head looked on and nodded some kind of polite approval, though clearly this was not what they were accustomed to seeing at the local Bijou. Nonetheless, when we graduated

they awarded us “special honors in art” in recognition of our efforts, if not our accomplishment.

Julian’s younger sister, Judy, the supporting actress in this film, is now married to a successful filmmaker in Hollywood. He managed to hold on to the sole 16 mm print of the film, and occasionally, when he becomes truly annoyed with me, he offers to run the film on his 16 mm projector. I always refuse. It has been many years since I last saw the film, and that last time was enough.

Surprisingly, it wasn’t a total loss.

As the 1930s were coming to a close, weighty events were occurring in Europe and Asia, events of much more significance than graduation from college. Developments that would alter all of our lives were now everyday news.

The Spanish Civil War was ending with the victory of the fascist general Franco, who, with assistance of Germany and Italy, crushed the Republicans and butchered the remaining forces that could not escape across the border into an unwelcoming France.

Hitler achieved total power in Germany and began liquidating the Jews. He also forcibly annexed Austria into the German Reich with scarcely a murmur of dissent from the other European powers. Next, he decided to move against Czechoslovakia. Stalin offered to join the French in armed resistance to Germany, as called for in the treaty both countries had signed with the Czechs. The French declined. Hitler won again. It was now clear to Stalin that the Western powers had no intention of stopping Hitler and were only waiting for his big move against the Soviets. To gain time to prepare for the German onslaught, Stalin signed a nonaggression pact with Hitler, surprising the rest of the world.

Free now of any threat from the east, the Germans marched against France. Their Panzers swept around the useless Maginot Line and were soon in possession of Paris. The remaining British troops in France escaped across the English Channel. Hitler prepared for an invasion of Britain.

Here in America, it appeared that the Germans were invincible. The great American icon, Charles Lindbergh, spoke glowingly of the splendid German air force and joined potent elements here who opposed any war against Germany. A surge of profascist and pro-Nazi sentiment swept across the country, not only because the Germans were strong, but because many people here shared Hitler’s anti-Semitism and, of course, his anticommunism.

Where was the FBI during all this? They seemed unconcerned about a Nazi menace; the Communists were still the ones we loved to hate. If Hitler destroyed the Soviets, so much the better.

The only noticeable effect for people like myself was that I now had to register with the local draft board. But being drafted was not an immediate prospect. However, the registration records were a convenient source of information for the FBI agents who later thought it important to know the color of my eyes.

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Politics is the art of the possible.

OTTO VON BISMARCK, 1867

Politics is not the art of the possible. It consists in choosing between the disastrous and the unpalatable.

JOHN KENNETH GALBRAITH, LETTER TO PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY, MARCH 2, 1962

5. Starting a Career

Page 41 of my FBI file refers to a letter dated December 24, 1958, to “Director” [Hoover himself] and one dated August 11, 1959, to “Legat” in London [the London embassy?]. These dates interest me because the file itself represents a summary of much information about my early life and family. The information about my father, born in Melitopol, Russia, is correct, and may have been garnered from his naturalization papers. The information about my mother being born in Liverpool is really strange, since I am certain that having arrived here being, at best, only a couple of months old, she always considered herself a born American and never bothered to be naturalized. How did the FBI come by that information? Also, an error ascribed to both of them the same year of birth, 1894. I know that my mother was a couple of years older than my father. The slight error in date is, of course, not significant, but it might be interesting to know the source of some of this information. Could it be that mysterious “reliable source” mentioned so frequently in the file and always “redacted”?

My father’s naturalization date of 1944 sheds some light on the man. As the catcher on the New Britain baseball team and as a man who long denied that he could speak any language other than English, it was painful for him to admit that he was not a native American. Since the statute of limitations has long since expired, I can report that he even voted regularly, and I can recall his voting for Herbert Hoover in 1928 when I, at age ten, argued with my classmates that Hoover was a better choice than Al Smith, as my father had explained. Of course, this was well before I had become a card-carrying member of the Party. My father finally decided to become naturalized only during World War II, when he became concerned that if his true status were ever discovered, he might be deported to Russia.

The file contains much of my early work history (3), even that I worked on a documentary film for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) during that New York period. But page 41 omits that interesting job. Which report is to be considered accurate and comprehensive? Such carelessness on the part of our esteemed investigating agency may be worrisome.

In any case, they did get it right when they listed my graduation from CCNY as occurring in June 1938. This shoved Julian and me out

into the cold world with an academic education and “special honors in art,” but without a profession or skill, save for a conviction that we would become filmmakers. How to go about it?

It didn’t hurt to know that in May of that year, a young director named Orson Welles had created a national sensation with his pseudo-newscast, *War of the Worlds*. Welles was only three years older than we. If he could do it . . . But how to get started? We had only an hour-long film that didn’t seem to cut any ice with anyone.

The only people we knew with any kind of film contacts were in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) film department. We had attended a film course there, rented some of their films for our own Film and Sprockets Society, and made the acquaintance of Iris Barry, who headed that museum film department. I can’t honestly say that we were regarded warmly there. We were a couple of smart alec kids from the Bronx who had never, by their standards, been involved in any serious filmmaking. They were elitist, and we didn’t fit. But we had nowhere else to go, so we trudged up with our precious 16 mm print and asked them to screen it. Maybe they would recognize the film talent we knew we had. A discouraging silence followed the screening.

Julian and I hung around the apartment in the Bronx that I shared with my father. By now, my mother’s condition had deteriorated to the point that she had to receive constant medical attention in a sanitarium. We had found a really nice one in Rockland County, across the Hudson. My father, my sister, and I took turns driving there to visit her regularly. My sister was now married and living elsewhere with her husband.

But Julian and I were really up a tree. How do a couple of penniless geniuses break into Hollywood? Then the phone rang, and one of several important miracles of my life occurred. I picked up the phone, a woman’s voice asked for me.

“Bernard Gordon?”

“Yes.”

“I’m calling from the motion picture company producing *The City*.” I’d never heard of it. But . . .

“Yes, ma’am.”

“I’m calling to offer you work with one of our directors. The job pays fifteen dollars per week.”

I couldn’t believe this. I wanted to stop and tell Julian what was happening, but I didn’t dare interrupt the lady.

“Excuse me, but how did you hear about me, about us?”

“Paul Rotha ran your film at the Museum of Modern Art. He thought

it showed some promise. He recommended you.” Rotha was a British documentary filmmaker and the author of one of the books we read and revered. Asking her to hold on, I turned to Julian and repeated this. Of course, he, too, was speechless.

I returned to the phone and explained, “But that film was made by two of us, not just by me. It wouldn’t be fair unless we were both hired.”

“I’m authorized to hire one person for fifteen dollars a week.” I turned to Julian again and in a whispered conversation we discussed what to do.

Back on the phone, “Could we both come to work and split the fifteen dollars?”

A heavy pause. Then, did she suppress a giggle? “I’m sure that will be acceptable.”

“Okay,” from me.

“You can report to work tomorrow morning at nine. The address is Number Four, West 12th Street. Just off the 14th Street subway exit.”

It was a deal.

All of this recurs to me forcefully when I see listed in the file that “From September, 1938, to January, 1939, he was Production Assistant for American Documentary Films, Inc.” (3). Actually, I never did know the official name of the company that paid us in cash. I had no occasion to deal with them as a corporation, and it has no conceivable meaning for my later miscreant behavior. But the FBI recorded this invaluable information. Even in retrospect, it is chilling to see the mean, niggling detail with which the police agency reports every insignificant detail. It feels like the work of a clerk in a newspaper morgue who lists everything, in the event of some ultimate necessity. Surely, other secret police agencies like the KGB, the Stasi, and whatever names they have gone by in Chile, Argentina, Turkey, and China had the same meticulous approach to recording everything from the color of one’s eyes to the scar on one’s chin. It makes it all seem so businesslike and normal.

After hanging up, Julian and I remained speechless. We were entering the business as filmmakers! It didn’t matter a damn that our first job would pay each of us seven dollars and fifty cents a week, a pittance even then. We could still travel on the subway all the way around New York City and back for a nickel.

The entire episode came vividly to mind in the fall of 2000 when I visited the Museum of Modern Art to introduce my book, *Hollywood Exile*. I was treated to dinner with a couple of my guests in the elegant

dining room of the museum. I expect that the dinner check for the three of us was well over a hundred dollars, and I thought back to that seven-dollar-and-fifty-cent job they helped me get. Sitting beside the current chair of the distinguished MoMA film division, I thanked her for the help I had received from the museum more than sixty years before and told her stories of those early days of the museum's film department.

The City was a 1938 documentary about urban planning, financed with fifty thousand dollars from the Carnegie Corporation. Given that the fare on the New York subway was then a nickel and is now a dollar and fifty cents, that budget was about the equivalent of a million and a half dollars today. At the time, it was the most expensive documentary film ever made. My remuneration did not make too big a dent in its expenses.

The codirectors were Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke. I had seen and admired Steiner's film *H2O* at the New School and was thrilled to be working with him. He had been an important fashion photographer for leading magazines. Van Dyke was a distinguished young photographer who had been a disciple of Edward Weston, the great West Coast photographer. I had seen and loved Van Dyke's work in photo journals and annuals. Both had worked on splendid documentary films with Pare Lorentz as cameramen: Van Dyke on *The River*, Steiner on *The Plow That Broke the Plains*. Julian and I couldn't wait for morning to come so we could put those nickels in the turnstile, get down to 12th Street in lower Manhattan, and go to work.

Both men had been members of Frontier Films. This was what the FBI would later call a Communist front organization, not restricted to Party members, but sensitive to the opinions of the Party and of journals like the *Daily Worker*. Frontier Films produced documentary films of protest in support of trade unions, Republican Spain, China (then beleaguered by Japanese aggressors), and the hungry and homeless, wherever a need existed to document or expose social and political evils as the left saw them. Frontier was like a big brother of the old Film and Photo League we had briefly joined some years before. Though the company struggled for production funds, it managed to make films of considerable stature. Where were these films exhibited? Not in theaters, but in union halls and in the meeting rooms of progressive organizations. I knew nothing about Frontier Films or about Steiner and Van Dyke's connection there until many years later.

The only hint I ever had of Steiner's political savvy came one day when we were driving around town in a station wagon on a photo mis-

sion. Steiner casually mentioned that he had heard I was a Trotskyite. I was astonished, and denied it. Whether he believed me, I didn't know, but he dropped the subject. I was puzzled, and thought long and hard about where such a story might have originated. The only answer I could come up with was that at CCNY I was probably regarded as a fairly progressive student. I usually joined the protest strikes, and since I never joined the YCL group at "The Kremlin," I may have been considered one of the enemy, the opposition Communists, ergo, a Trotskyite.

Since I began reminiscing about those days and thinking of FBI files, I have wondered how many files exist on the two filmmakers and on Frontier Films itself. I'll bet there are a ton of them.

The address on 12th Street was Steiner's home, just a few doors west of Fifth Avenue. Once a palatial nineteenth-century residence, it still looked palatial to me. The main room was an enormous space, at least thirty by forty feet facing the street, with a twelve-foot ceiling. This was a studio, an office, and a gathering place for everyone. The room was virtually empty except for a desk, a few chairs, and a litter of cases for cameras and equipment. I was told I would work out of here as Steiner's assistant. Julian was shipped to another address in nearby Greenwich Village, where Van Dyke had an apartment.

Steiner was a man of about forty, not heavy but substantial. He was pleasant, though always serious and professional. He concentrated on his work and never said anything personal about me or himself. He seemed a naturally warm person, but preoccupied with the problems of the production. Willard Van Dyke was younger, slim, wiry, and attractive to women.

For the next several months, every day—and frequently on Saturdays and Sundays—I worked at Steiner's side on the day's photography assignment. Although he was also codirector and coproducer, I was not privy to whatever problems and decisions were involved in the script, narration, production, or financing of the film.

In the early morning, we would start from 12th Street. Steiner prepared which cameras, tripods, lights, film, and other supplies we would take. He carefully loaded his 35 mm Eymo, the handheld camera that, although spring-wound and spring-driven, was then the standard of excellence. Steiner protected his precious camera as if it were an only child. I learned that no one else touched it. I watched him load it with the hundred-foot roll of film and repeatedly asked him to teach me, and he would promise to do so, but he never did. Eventually this led to trouble.

The object of the film was to demonstrate the need for urban planning. We went everywhere and shot everything that illustrated the evils of life in the city, as well as in the slums and shantytowns of other communities. The film opened with sunny idyllic shots of a traditional New England town, the white church, the pleasant homes in a spacious setting. There was even a shot of the village blacksmith happily at work pounding iron horseshoes. A lovely dream of the past. But now!

Early on, before I was associated with the work, they had shot great footage in a Pittsburgh slum of mine workers' shanties, weary women toiling in homes without heat or running water; children playing games with nothing but rag dolls in filthy gutters; men returning home from their shifts, black with coal dust, bathing in a tin tub in the kitchen. Stark contrast to that early New England idyll.

Now, we had to film what life was like for most people in a place like New York—hurried, impersonal, bleak in the midst of crowds, harsh and unsatisfying. Sequences had to be photographed that demonstrated dramatically and visually (with a minimum of narration) the realities and drawbacks of city life.

In addition to my team with Steiner, there was Van Dyke with Julian and a couple of other young cameramen who went about seeking visuals that would tell the story. One such cameraman was Edward Anhalt, who had devised a hidden camera arrangement. The camera nested inside a small piece of luggage that had a hole through which the lens peered. Anhalt used levers to start and stop the camera. He went around slum neighborhoods without attracting attention and got great shots of ragged kids at play in traffic-burdened streets, dodging between the moving cars. Not at all like the sweet, green playing grounds of that New England village.

One day Steiner and I went to the offices of a utility company. In an enormous room, women typists were lined up in three or four rows stretching back maybe a hundred feet. There were, perhaps, a hundred women banging away at the machines, faces concealed behind the tall document holders from which they were copying.

This, of course, was to illustrate the total drudgery and impersonal quality of work. I was excited by the possibility of a shot that would tell this story in a single image. By now, I could open my mouth and make a suggestion. I wanted an angle that would show hundreds of machines with only the tall backs of the document holders and all those busily working arms visible in long rigid lines—no heads, no faces, all totally impersonal, machine-like. Steiner listened to me, but was not in a posi-

tion to make the shot I wanted. This wasn't MGM. We didn't have lights to cover the whole room. Placing the camera low enough to show the faceless quality of the work was not practical. I was disappointed and deflated. But the shot Steiner made that appeared in the finished film, though not as smashing as what I had in mind, did capture the essence of what we intended.

Other scenes written into the script required more originality and a bit of hanky-panky. In one instance we decided to show that people in the big city were too rushed and impersonal even to notice one another. The oft-repeated myth was that one could drop dead on the sidewalk and no one would bother to stop and help.

We hired an actor to play the dying man and set up a camera below street level, where it would not be visible to passers-by, in one of those brownstone fronts where the lower apartment entrance is reached down a few steps from the street. We made sure the actor understood to fall on the chalk marks on the sidewalk so that the camera would be focused on him. Ready! Roll! Action! The man fell as arranged. Almost immediately a half dozen concerned people stopped and gathered to help him. Before repeating the act, we had to wait until the annoyingly helpful New Yorkers went their way, and we could start all over again. We repeated this scenario a half dozen times. No dice. We finally gave up, paid off the actor, packed up and left. There is no such sequence in the final film.

Then we wanted to illustrate what happened on one of the streets near the financial district at lunchtime, when it seemed as if the entire population of the city exited the skyscrapers and crowded the street so completely that from above the view was of nothing but a sea of human heads. We mounted the camera at a window high up on one of the adjoining skyscrapers, tied it down firmly so that no one could move or jiggle it, and made the shot. No problem. We stopped the camera and left it in place so that we could go back on Sunday, when the street would be totally deserted, and restart the camera; without a cut or dissolve from one frame to the next, the contrast would be seen most dramatically.

Early Sunday morning I picked up Steiner at his place, and we drove down to the location. We had arranged for permission to go into the office where the camera was securely fastened. All went well. The precious Eymo was properly in place and undisturbed. Just a touch of the key, and it would start. But looking down, we could see a lone figure, a man ambling along the street. For Steiner, this ruined the effect. I begged him to let me go down and police the street and keep people from entering it, but he wouldn't have it that way.

With the camera in place, we returned on several later Sundays, and always the same problem. As I recall, we never did take the shot of the empty street. I regarded this as some kind of nuttiness on Steiner's part. It seemed to me that even with a lone pedestrian, or even a few, the story would be told. And why not let me go down and keep people from entering the street? Was this a kind of purism? If so, why was the fake dead man on the street acceptable? Recently, when looking at a videotape of the film, I saw that, although Steiner's original concept was never realized, the final film does contain shots of very crowded streets followed by shots of very empty streets. It's not quite the same or quite as effective as Steiner wished, but it works.

Crowding and eating became a repeated theme of the film. We tried to hide a camera inside and below the counter of a midtown cafeteria to photograph diners seated close together, gnawing on their sandwiches, staring vacantly into space, utterly oblivious of the diners on either side of them. You call that a meal? But, again, the hoped-for result was not obtained. The diners always became aware of the camera, became very animated, and turned to each other.

As I recall, I suggested that we set up a table in Steiner's office, send out for sandwiches, and photograph any or all of us miserable and hungry assistants eating the sandwiches as though this were the counter of a café. This time, Steiner agreed. My flawed recollection is that I turned out to be the actor with the most vacant and distant gaze who managed best to conceal his pleasure at the free feed. I was photographed *ad nauseam* and told I had been a great success. Looking now at the tape, I find that others, including Julian, also successfully played the diners and are included in the final footage. If you want to see, however briefly, what either of us looked like in 1938, rent the video.

The subject was not exhausted. Next time, the whole crew got together and set up cameras and lights in the Green Line Café, just off Wall Street. At noon, the empty lunchroom was invaded by such a hungry horde of office workers that it was difficult to avoid being trampled. Every seat at every table was instantly filled. We photographed what we could. I noticed a large bank of electric toasters. At that time, there didn't seem to be any large-scale commercial toasters. These looked like twenty or thirty home toasters grouped together. Slices of bread were dropped into the slots on top and a minute later they popped up. I was fascinated by the staccato rhythm of so many bread slices jumping out of their slots again and again. I asked Steiner to point his camera at the toasters. He said he already had. I begged him to take more shots of

the toasters and from different angles. Irritated from the pressure of the work, he wanted to know what we could ever do with more than a single shot. I didn't know, but somehow he decided to humor me and make more toaster shots.

In my months of work on *The City*, I can't say I contributed anything more important than driving the station wagon and hauling cameras and equipment. Of course, as a result of the blacklist I am now accustomed to not receiving credit for my film work, but I can informally lay claim to credit for the toasters. Henwar Rodakiewicz was brought in from Hollywood to edit the film and make sense of the hodgepodge of scenes photographed over the months. He had worked on quite a few feature films, and was an expert on the kind of montage that was very popular in Hollywood. He knew what to do with the toasters. He combined the various shots of the popping toast with other shots, and then intercut scenes to create a wonderful staccato sequence that captured a sense of the pace of city life.

Every afternoon we all gathered in a projection room in midtown Manhattan to see the footage that had been shot the previous day. The dailies. Steiner and Van Dyke commented on what had been accomplished, what looked good, what had to be done again, and what had to be done next. These sessions each day gave Julian and me a real sense of what was involved in filmmaking as well as a sense of participating in it. We didn't join the discussion, but felt we were part of a team. It was in some ways the best part of the day.

I suppose that the current generation can't imagine what it would be like to be nineteen or twenty years old and never to have been up in an airplane, or how irresistible it would have been to have an opportunity to fly.

One day Willard, with whom Julian always worked, came to me and asked if I knew how to load an Eymo. He explained that he was planning to go up in a plane and photograph scenes over New York and New Jersey, where there was a new planned suburb, a "green" village. Why did he want to use me instead of Julian? I supposed it was because Julian hadn't learned to load the camera. This was the opportunity of a lifetime, so double-crossing my partner didn't matter. Besides, it wasn't done on my initiative. The fact that I still didn't know how to load the Eymo didn't stop me either.

We drove to a small airfield on Long Island where the hired plane and pilot waited. The plane was a flimsy high-wing Stinson monoplane

covered in red fabric. Inside, there was a seat for the pilot and a passenger, and crowded behind was a single seat for a second passenger. We removed the door on the passenger side out of which the Eymo could be pointed. We tied down a tripod to the back of the seat, fixed the camera to it, and aimed it out the space where the door belonged. We were all outfitted with padded, smelly, greasy coveralls to protect us from the cold at a thousand feet with the wind blowing freely through the plane. Willard carefully checked that the camera was loaded. I was boosted into the back seat behind it, and we took off.

We taxied down the bumpy runway and were soon flying high above New York and the Triboro Bridge that Willard wanted to photograph as another example of the new high-tech highways that would free us from traffic jams. The pilot banked steeply at Willard's request so he could shoot out of the open doorway. I could have felt like I was falling out of the plane. But no. So far, so good. I had no sense of height. It was not like looking down from a tall building and seeing the distance to the ground. It was more like looking down at a photograph of what was below. But I kept watching nervously as Willard ran film through the camera. The hundred-foot load in the camera represented only four minutes of running time. When would we run out and have to reload? I tried frantically to recall how Steiner opened the camera, took out one roll, inserted the next one, and threaded it through the maze of rollers and sprockets. Hopeless.

As we flew over the Hudson River heading for the Jersey side, I began to feel nauseous. By the time we reached the site of the new suburb, I was feeling so sick that I was certain I would throw up all over Willard and the camera. Sure enough, Willard turned to ask me to reload. He took one look at me and exclaimed, "You're green!" I was feeling so awful that I couldn't even nod. I was just fighting to hold it down. Would I be responsible for ruining this expensive outing? My film career would end.

Willard was cool. He took charge, reloaded the camera himself, glancing anxiously at me, silently imploring me to hold it. Have you ever been seriously seasick or airsick? How do you hold it down? I don't know. But there was too much at stake. I held it. Willard continued the work. I concentrated on not heaving. When we finally landed on the airstrip, they gingerly handed me out. As soon as I touched ground, I gave a huge gaseous burp and was completely fine. Willard never did learn that I couldn't load an Eymo. He was just grateful that I hadn't ruined the trip. And I never have confessed to Julian (until now) how I lied to get up in that plane and what happened when I did.

Since those days on *The City* I have worked in major Hollywood studios, made films in Europe, worked with big name stars and film directors, and even run a film studio myself outside Madrid, Spain. But I look back on those few months, my first work with real filmmakers, as the best and most satisfying time I have ever had at work. There's nothing like a first time. But good times come to an end.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the FBI, the Army, the CIA and many police department “red squads” clipped newspapers and attended public meetings with the aim of identifying people sympathetic to communists. Their agents also infiltrated many law-abiding groups in search of “reds” or fellow travelers. The Army, whose only domestic duty was to put down riots, eventually spied on every demonstration of 20 people or more. But all of this snooping never predicted a riot or uncovered any plot, communist or otherwise, to turn a lawful protest into a criminal attack.

During the Cold War, the FBI undertook more than 500,000 counterintelligence investigations against domestic political groups. Not one produced an indictment. Yet the investigations gradually changed the character of the agency, from one chiefly concerned with law enforcement to one centered on spying.

Trouble was, the more the FBI thought of itself as an intelligence agency, the less it felt restrained by law. Without a statutory charter, Justice Department guidelines or meaningful legislative oversight, the bureau conducted thousands of burglaries, called “black bag” jobs, and opened hundreds of thousands of first-class letters. It also bugged, without warrants, people not suspected of any crimes.

PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER H. PYLE, *Los Angeles Times*,
JUNE 9, 2002

6. New Beginnings

Dropped from our salaried positions, we were fortunately recommended for another project by Steiner and Van Dyke. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) wanted a short documentary film for an upcoming event, but the budget—six hundred dollars—was a trifle low for Steiner and Van Dyke after they had enjoyed the luxury of spending fifty thousand dollars to make *The City*. But after months of seven and a half bucks a week, we didn't think the budget looked so bad. Maybe we could even wind up with some pocket money. Besides, it was an opportunity to make a film. This event, with no mention of the money involved, is faithfully recorded in my file (3).

The subject? An elderly but still substantial woman, Fanya Cohen, who had been one of the original organizers of the union, was now pensioned off as their cultural director. Her notion of culture was to gather young female garment workers and organize them into a mass dance group, forty or fifty in a large room moving rhythmically and not very gracefully through set positions. Fanya Cohen wanted her achievement enshrined on film. Would that we had seen it her way. Of course, we immediately had something much more ambitious in mind.

We wrote and shot a comic episode of a couple of young people joining the union and getting involved in Fanya's dance class. The scenario required dialogue. There was a crude early sound system whereby you recorded the sound on a turntable, which then had to be synchronized with the picture. We rented and paid for the equipment, the lights, the whole deal.

We screened the finished product at a huge, noisy, annual dancing-and-drinking event in a hotel ballroom. We had come prepared with a large roll-up screen, a projector, and a turntable for the sound disc. But the beer was flowing freely, and there seemed to be no way to stop the music or the dancing (ballroom style, not Fanya's). Nor could the ballroom lights be turned down. As a result the image on the screen was faint, the sound was inaudible, and no one paid the least attention to our film. Which was just as well, since the sound synchronization didn't work at all. If Fanya Cohen was present, I have blocked that conveniently. Julian and I wrapped up the rented equipment and sneaked out. Even those books that religiously record every frame of film that has ever been exposed happily seem to have missed this one. I went home,

came down with a bad case of the flu for more than a week, and read all of *War and Peace*. Well, you have to learn how to make films some way. And it's better to blow it on a six-hundred-dollar opus.

The file also mentions "commercial fashion films" (3), a venture I had forgotten. Someone who found out we were filmmakers approached us with a plan to photograph models wearing new dresses and hats. Then, instead of traveling around the country loaded down with bags of garments which had to be pulled out, pressed, and presented with or without girls, the salesman would simply have film, a projector, and an intriguing new way to appeal to shopkeepers. We made several films of pretty girls parading around for our camera in the loft we had rented. No, no underwear was for sale. But the venture capitalist soon ran out of capital, and the idea didn't take off. I never did learn the final outcome, and I wish the FBI, since it took the trouble to record this, could fill me in on what eventually happened.

The FBI apparently missed one project that was worth recording. A man named Ira Green had produced a couple of Yiddish language films. These were shot on the cheapest stage Green could find in Weehawken, New Jersey. The actors were good ones from the Yiddish stage, which had flourished for a long while on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. They worked for nothing but promises, happy to be in a real motion picture. Through a family connection, Julian had wangled a job as a lowly assistant, happy, like the actors, to be working on an actual sound stage. The relationship with Julian flourished, and Green decided to branch into English-language filmmaking by way of a production about the Negro agricultural scientist, George Washington Carver.

The attraction of this for Green was that the Department of Agriculture would supply, free of charge, endless amounts of 35 mm film about Carver, who, as a botanist and chemist, worked successfully to help Southern farmers diversify from soil-exhausting cotton farming to peanut planting, among other things. Julian had a contract guaranteeing him two hundred dollars for the finished product. I worked unofficially with Julian in a rented editing room. My connection was no secret because some of Green's hangers-on would come around occasionally to watch us at work. We were just about finished with the editing when the next miracle occurred.

Julian's family connections came through again. They had managed to get him a job as a reader at Republic Studios in Hollywood. Hollywood! Republic paid readers \$25 per week—less than the majors, but who cared? Julian, ready to take off, formally introduced me to Green,

who agreed that I could do the considerable remaining work. I would be paid the two hundred dollars originally promised to Julian. My partner took off west in a 1934 Nash coupe that he had acquired from a friend for a borrowed two hundred dollars. Trusting he would make it all the way across the country in the winter snow, he promised to send for me as soon as he was settled.

I worked hard, completed the editing, wrote the few scenes that had to be shot, and, most importantly, wrote the narration that would actually tell the story of this remarkable scientist. Green and his buddies shot the few necessary connecting scenes. I cut them into the film.

I had a finished 35 mm film for which I was largely responsible, which would be shown in regular theaters, with my name right up on the screen for the world to see. On the way out, I asked Green for my two hundred dollars.

“I’ll send it to you next week,” he promised.

I’m still waiting. But that’s another story.

With Julian away in California and my film career on hold, my father insisted that I prepare myself for some kind of profession that would support me. Not this film nonsense.

The only thing reasonably suitable was a teaching career in the public school system. I registered as a postgraduate student at CCNY and took some education courses to qualify as a teacher . . . much as I loathed the idea. Since I was now attending classes, I decided also to register for a course in creative writing.

The course was taught by Professor Theodore Goodman, an acerbic man who had given up a boring career in law. He taught creative writing because he loved literature. His favorite author was James Joyce, whose *Ulysses* was well-thumbed on his shelf, and he was one of the few people then who was struggling to study *Finnegans Wake*. Our text for the course was Joyce’s *Dubliners*.

Early on he told us, “I don’t care what kind of writers you want to become. If you like pulp fiction, okay; if you want to get rich writing film scripts, that’s okay, too.” He even let us know that a former student of his now earned \$750 a week in Hollywood. This was an unimaginable sum for us, and I’m afraid that it stuck a chord with me.

Goodman’s favorite former student was Leonard Ehrlich, who had been struggling for ten years, word by word, sentence by sentence, to write and rewrite a biography of John Brown, the abolitionist. To Goodman’s clear admiration, Ehrlich was starving in a garret down in Greenwich Village while working on this book. Once, when Goodman

managed to get Ehrlich uptown, he invited him for lunch at a nice Italian restaurant near the school. He offered Ehrlich the menu.

“Order anything you like.”

Scarcely glancing at the large menu, Ehrlich said, “I’ll have the cheese sandwich.”

Goodman, knowing that Ehrlich was always hungry, protested. “The spaghetti and meatballs is very good here. How about having a decent meal for a change?”

Ehrlich refused. “If I start eating like that . . .” he struggled to explain, “I’ll just be miserable tomorrow . . . and the next day . . . and I’ll be thinking about food all the time and not about writing.” Take that lesson, you would-be writers!

We had to turn out a short story every week. The student who wrote the best one read it to the class, then took comments. Though I was not older than the other students, I was somewhat more mature. I had graduated from school. I had been out in the world. For whatever reason, I was always the one selected to read my story. For the first time I began to think I might have some talent as a writer, but Goodman, if he was impressed, didn’t give an inch. When I sought his help, his support, or his approval, he kept me at a distance. Finally, he explained that writing was a lonely life, that writers all sought love and approval, but that the worst thing that could happen to a writer was to get such rewards. It would kill his drive to write. So, go ahead, be miserable, write well, and live on cheese and Wonder Bread.

During this period, my mother who had been in the sanitarium for a year and a half, died. Her death is noted in the FBI file (2). Even now, after more than sixty years, I recall her passing with pain. She had been cheated of life. Still in her forties, so much of her life had been consumed by a frightening illness. We had been attentive, but that had amounted to an hour of visiting every other day. It was a long drive to and from the city, and when the visiting hour was up, we would leave with a certain feeling of relief. What was there to talk about? Her health? Her chances of recovery? How long could that fiction be maintained? She wasn’t foolish. We returned to busy lives she couldn’t share and would never share. My sister was married and pregnant; my father, still young, was trying to make a new life for himself. I was wound up in my ambition. No matter how pleasant the sanitarium, and it was bright and clean and professionally run, she was alone. We had made friends with the doctor in charge, and he did his best. He even tried to help her with the recently discovered sulfa drugs. It was useless. Maybe she was still hoping that

her beloved son would become a doctor or scientist and come up with the magic pill. This is just what did happen. Not I, of course, but a devoted doctor, not long after the discovery of penicillin, came up with a variant that worked against tuberculosis. But that was not until 1944, six years too late for my mother. To this day, I keep thinking how alone she surely felt, how careful she was not to be demanding, and how I wish I had done more.

I wrote about much of this in my work for class. Because it was all so current and painful, the work evidently had feeling and was effective. Goodman finally caught on and offered a bit of profound advice, though not as a teacher of writing. He said, "Don't try to avoid pain. It will always come at you from an unexpected direction." I have not always been able to live up to this, but I have remembered it with gratitude.

On a more prosaic level, he criticized my work frequently for being ascriptive, not descriptive. In ascription, you write about the scene as though observing it from outside. In description, you are not writing about a scene, you are presenting it in all its reality. Good writing is description. I have tried to remember this, too. Show, don't tell.

I kept checking with Green about my two hundred dollars and about the distribution prospects for the film. The money would be paid, I was assured. The film was about to be exhibited. Time passed. Though still not paid, I was eventually told that the film was to open at the largest theater in Harlem, where it would presumably be received by an interested and respectful audience. Proudly, I dressed in my best and took my girlfriend to the theater at 117th Street and 7th Avenue to share my pleasure at the moment when, for the first time, my name would appear, so much larger than life, on the screen.

The film started. The canned music came up. The main title appeared, then the credits. But not my name. Instead, for director and writer were the names of a couple of Green's henchmen who were always hanging around. With my bile rising, I sat through the film, then rushed out to the lobby afterwards to collar Green, who accepted my obvious fury with total equanimity. No problem, he assured me smoothly. There just wasn't enough time before the premiere to change the titles from the ones that had been made before I came on the scene. An obvious lie, but short of punching him out, what could I do? I demanded the money he owed me. Same stall. It took a lot of TLC from my girlfriend to calm me down.

After several more attempts to get satisfaction from Green, I went to an attorney, a friend of my father's. He explained that any serious lawsuit

could not be scheduled on a court calendar for two or three years. He advised me to file a *pro per* action: with the limited damages involved (under a thousand dollars) and with the understanding that I would represent myself in court, I could get on the special calendar in a matter of weeks. He further assured me that I didn't need a lawyer in such a matter. All I had to do was go into court and simply explain to the judge what had happened.

I appeared in court with the same girlfriend, confident of my ability to speak up and knowing the justice of my case. I saw Green come in with three of his hangers-on and an attorney. The judge was rapidly disposing of the cases as they came up. At my turn, I went to the stand and told my story. No questions from the bench. Green's lawyer questioned me; I merely repeated my story. Then the lawyer called in succession each of Green's men who were in the courtroom. Each of them testified under oath that he had never seen me before this very moment, that my claim was totally fraudulent, and that all the work had been done by a man, Julian Zimet, now in California and out of reach. I thought their position was so preposterous that I was a shoo-in for a judgment in my favor. Instead, the judge banged his gavel and ruled for the defense. I was so startled that I didn't understand what had happened, nor did I realize that the judge was awarding damages to the defense. Talk about adding insult to injury, or injury to injury! I did come to long enough to notice that the court stenographer looked at me sympathetically, clearly letting me know that he knew I had been telling the truth and that the others were a pack of cheap perjurers. Now to my list of complaints about the system I could add the New York courts. Many years later, I would add the Supreme Court to that list. If the Supreme Court wants to get off my list, it will have to stop yielding to the FBI, which makes lame excuses about why it is permitted to black out innocuous file information as much as forty or fifty years old.

Of course I ignored the hundred-dollar judgment against me. Who had a hundred dollars, anyway? And I would rather have gone to jail than pay that bastard. To jump ahead quite a bit, when I finally got to Hollywood and was working at my first job as a reader at Paramount Studios for thirty-five dollars a week, I was served with a paper demanding payment on the threat of garnishing my wages. A friendly attorney at the studio explained there was no way to escape the court's judgment now that I had a job. He made a deal to reduce the cost so I *only* had to pay what amounted to two weeks' salary to Ira Green. Maybe this pushed me over the edge into radical discontent with capitalism.

However, some satisfaction finally came my way. Almost ten years later, when I was working as a screenwriter at Warner Bros., I had a note from my brother-in-law. He was working with attorneys who were chasing down deadbeats. Ira Green's name had come up among the impecunious debtors. He wrote to ask me what I wanted him to do. Happy to learn that Green had wound up dead broke, I said, "Hang him."

In 1939 and 1940 there were other events transpiring that were of larger interest than my battles with Ira Green. On March 18, 1939, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Litvinov, proposed to the British that there should be a five-nation pact among the USSR, the UK, France, Poland, and Romania in which they would agree to act collectively against Germany if the Germans attacked any of them. The British declined; there was no pact. The Russians now understood clearly that they would soon be fighting a war alone against the Germans; Stalin concluded a pact with Hitler. This totally unexpected development took the world by surprise, including most left-leaning liberals. The Nazis had always been understood to be the ultimate enemy of the Soviets and all Communists. What were they doing in bed together? In retrospect, it appears to many, including myself, that Stalin did what he had to do to gain time to prepare for the war that he knew Hitler would launch against the Soviets, regardless of any pact.

On September 1, 1939, the Nazis dragged some inmates out of a concentration camp, dressed them in Polish uniforms, and shot them. The bodies were produced to "prove" that the Poles had started a war against Germany. The Germans drove into Poland and butchered the elite of the Polish cavalry, who tried to resist the German tanks from horseback. Germany occupied the western half of Poland; the Russians, as part of their pact with Hitler, took over in the east.

Over the next eight months, Hitler digested Poland, rounded the Jews into concentration camps, and then moved quickly and successfully against Holland, Luxembourg, Belgium, and France. After the remaining British troops escaped across the channel, Hitler began bombing Britain as a prelude to invasion.

In Asia, the Japanese were subjugating and brutalizing China, after massacring the people of Nanking in 1937. Progressive people in the United States demanded we stop sending scrap iron to the Japanese, which they were using to build their war machine. In their own boycott of Japan, progressive women refused to wear silk stockings. As a young man who had learned to love girls' silk-clad legs, I was not visibly pleased when a girl I was dating showed up with heavy lisle (cotton)

stockings and boasted of her progressive principles. I must have made a face, because she came down on me.

“You’re a reactionary male chauvinist,” she cried, “and you don’t give a damn what’s happening to the poor Chinese.” She strode away.

“Hey,” I ran after her, “I do care about what the Japanese are doing. Can I help it if I like your legs in silk stockings?”

She just continued to stride off.

“You’re right,” I offered. “You’re absolutely right not to wear anything silk.” I finally mollified her, sort of.

Then along came one of the great inventions of the century: nylon. Is it possible today to conceive of civilization without the delights of sheer panty hose (only invented after the introduction of nylon) or the endless parade of unmentionables that leap out at you from the full-page ads in the *Los Angeles Times*? And, of course, the thousands of other uses of nylon in garments and fabrics of all kinds. There could never be enough silkworms to supply so many needs. It’s true that nylon put millions of silkworms out of work, though I like to think that they continue to weave their cocoons peacefully undisturbed. But the new and miraculous nylon was not generally available for some years. Almost all the nylon produced during the coming war was needed for parachutes and other war materiel. After Pearl Harbor, Japanese silk was certainly not available. Girls used tanning leg makeup. I knew some who, during the winter cold, stood over the floor furnaces in their offices to warm their bare legs before hitting the typewriters. In wartime, everyone suffers. But we were not yet at war.

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On account of being a democracy and run by the people, we are the only nation in the world that has to keep a government four years, no matter what it does.

WILL ROGERS

7. From Sea to Shining Sea

For young people under sixty, 1940 may seem like medieval times, since there were no computers, no Internet, no e-mail. A telephone call from coast to coast cost five dollars or more, a considerable sum for most of us. Communication from coast to coast was slow. Even air mail was a luxury requiring extra postage. It was frustrating but understandable that I heard little from Julian as months passed. But he sent occasional word about his work as a reader at Republic, about the girls he was dating, and about the dismal apartments he rented. He let me know that he was waiting until he could find a pleasant place where we could both settle. Finally, the word came. Come.

To raise money for the move, I sold my Graflex camera and my ancient microscope, an antique manufactured in Danzig. The few gold coins from my bar mitzvah were long gone. I had about sixty dollars to get me to California. The very word was thrilling. I must have felt something like my forbears who left for America, the promised land. I searched the classified ads in the *Times* and found an offer that sounded right. Sixteen dollars to share a ride to Los Angeles. I agreed to appear on a certain day and hour at an address in the mid-40s of Manhattan. I said farewell to my friends, my pregnant sister, and my father. My father, busy trying to make a life for himself, had little interest in me and less comprehension of my foolish notion of becoming a filmmaker. Though uneasy at my departure, he finally pressed a ten-dollar bill into my hand as a farewell gift. This raised my capital to seventy dollars.

On that sunny September morning, as I looked at the cream-colored double-parked 1939 two-door Ford that would carry me clear across America to that promised land of “golden apples,” I felt like Ulysses, Marco Polo, Columbus, or Magellan—whoever had ventured forth with a high heart to conquer the world. Could that be managed in a two-door Ford? I introduced myself to the owner-driver.

“My name is Bernie,” I told him as I handed over the sixteen dollars for the trip. This left me with fifty-four dollars for the six or seven days across the country. Plenty, I was sure. I could live on coffee and doughnuts if necessary. He told me his name was “Ollie” something or other. He had an accent, and I soon learned that he was from Danzig, so the last name was probably Polish. Recently Danzig had been much in the news, a port city in the Polish Corridor that Hitler had noisily

annexed after his brutal assault on Poland. Ollie was a well-built man, about five feet ten, a trifle overweight, with a soft round face. He was a cook for the Fred Harvey chain of restaurants and lived and worked in Los Angeles.

I introduced myself to my two fellow passengers. The first was a woman of about forty who seemed very middle-aged to me. "Madge" was neither attractive nor unattractive, neither slim nor heavy, perhaps a bit dowdy with too much makeup to my indifferent twenty-one-year-old eyes. She appeared quiet and pleasant, a plus for a stranger with whom there would be enforced intimacy in the small car for a long trip.

The last passenger was a surprise. Henry Harper was a Negro. He was slim, immaculately dressed, *café au lait*, about forty. If his speech was at all accented, it was New England, not "Southern." You must reach back almost sixty years to understand how different matters were then. Overt racism was not then an attitude requiring either restraint or apology. Although I had already been exposed to progressive ideas at college and elsewhere, I had never had a Negro friend or acquaintance, had never worked with or seen one in a decent job, except as an entertainer. I shook Mr. Harper's hand cordially and said that I was pleased to meet him. I felt immediately that it was necessary to reassure him and the other two that his presence was no problem for me. I report now with some embarrassment that I also thought this was an opportunity to prove I was one American who had risen above racism. Today, all this sounds immature, even phoney. I shudder to think how African American friends would now regard my "magnanimity." But that was then and this is now. The trip across the country certainly would prove that racism was alive in America.

We stowed our bags in the limited trunk space, roped the excess onto a luggage rack, and set off for a journey across an America I had never seen. Ollie was not forthcoming about his personal life, but was in no way bossy or authoritative because we were in his car. He accepted direction from me about how to find our way out of Manhattan via the Holland Tunnel. Madge remained an unknown to me, though I suspected that she and Ollie got friendly and had decided to sleep together by the time we reached New Orleans. Henry Harper, an educated man with some university connection, had never been south of New York, and was probably ill-advised to take a drive through the Southern states in those days.

We reached Winchester, Virginia, in time for dinner and stopped at a modest coffee shop that boasted a soda fountain bar and a few tables

for diners. The place was empty. The four of us sat down at a table. The courtly Virginian proprietor handed out three menus and politely informed us that our “chauffeur,” glancing at Henry, would have to take his dinner in the kitchen. What to do? I knew that Ollie and Madge would make no fuss. Should I? And to what effect? And if I did, how would any of us get dinner? I shriveled into myself and did nothing. What about Henry? Seeing that he could expect no help from us, he got up and walked stiffly to the kitchen door to which he was directed by the proprietor. I suppose that most of us have moments in life that we look back on with shame, moments that won’t die. This is one of mine.

After dinner we got back into the Ford and continued south. In the twilight, we drove past the well-tended fields and the lovely apple orchards of Winchester country. Even after night had fallen we pushed on, but at the urgent request of Henry we stopped at a gas station, where he headed for the men’s room. We waited patiently for a while. But he didn’t reappear. We became restless. Ollie got out from behind the wheel and started to pace; Madge remained in the back seat. I also got out and leaned against the car, uneasy at the rising irritability in the others.

“What can be taking him so long?” Ollie demanded. From inside the car, Madge nodded her agreement with this reasonable question. I had an image of Henry violently nauseous because of his experience at dinner and heaving out his guts. I even began to worry that he might be in serious trouble and need help. How could we know that he hadn’t had a heart attack? Or whatever. I approached the door of the men’s room and listened for any sound from inside. Nothing. The others watched me.

“We really have to get going,” from Ollie.

Reluctantly, I tapped on the door and asked Henry if he was all right. When he finally came out, he offered no explanation, but got back into the car, and we drove off in a sullen silence. An hour or so later, we stopped at a private home where the sign offered beds for the night for two dollars. The people were glad to accept our business but, again, there was the problem of Henry, the black man. They had no room for him unless, of course, one of us was willing to share a room with him. I quickly agreed, and wondered if this was how it would be all the way on Route 66, at least until we reached civilization in California.

None of this came as a total surprise to me. I had read about much worse things than segregated eating and sleeping: about lynchings, chain gangs, brutal trials, and executions, all visited on blacks. But even this modest eyewitness experience was gut-wrenching in a way I could

never forget. Now I was off to make real films about real people. Would this kind of reality become part of that?

The next day in Atlanta when we stopped for lunch, we understood that separate dining facilities were in order, so we set a time and place to reunite and went to a diner in the center of town, while our friend sought out the ghetto. Meeting after lunch in a strange town was another hassle. Ollie and Madge were not mean, but unhappy about the nuisance.

After six days of steady driving we reached the blessed border of California, where we stopped for gas and piled into a busy coffee shop. When Henry hesitated, I took him by the arm and assured him that we were finally out of the South and that those problems were surely behind us. We sat at the counter, ordered pie and coffee. I was pleased to see that we were all served without protest. But even as we started to eat, the proprietor came dashing over, snatched the food and drink away from Henry, bawled out the waitress, and let everyone know in a loud voice that “nigras” weren’t served here. Shameful moment number two. Much worse than Virginia. Instead of stomping out with Henry, I sat there and choked down my pie and coffee, the kind of inexcusable behavior you recall for the rest of your life, even in the promised land, especially in the promised land.

Once in California, we drove on impatiently until late at night. Ollie considerably drove Henry to a black hotel in South Central Los Angeles. I helped him with his bags and offered him the telephone number I had for Julian, now my only connection, and suggested we try to get together again. Henry agreed. But with everything as mixed up as it proved to be, I never connected with him. Ollie dropped me at the corner of Hollywood and Vine; then he and Madge went on together to whatever they had in mind. Perhaps they lived happily ever after.

I was twenty-one and standing at the intersection of Hollywood and Vine. True, the fabled corner was dark and dismal, and I wasn’t certain I would have a place to sleep this chill September night, but telephone calls were still only a nickel. The only bright light came through the plate glass window of the Pig ’n Whistle Cafe. No hint here of MGM, Fox, Paramount, RKO. No problem. The glamour would come. Hollywood would know I had arrived. The great films had not all been made. *Potemkin*, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, *Alexander Nevsky*, *The Baker’s Wife*, *Port of Shadows*, *Grand Illusion*, and some American films crept in, too, *Modern Times*, *Greed*, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Work remained to be done. The names of all the revered

filmmakers, deathless but, incredibly, still among the living: Eisenstein, Renoir, Murnau, Chaplin, Capra, Milestone, Griffith, Von Stroheim.

I called the number I had for Julian, was told to call another. Call after call to sometimes irritable people because of the lateness of the hour. One number led to another, and still no Julian. Where the hell was he?

As I stood there at the telephone on the darkened corner, I felt more and more like a character in an Edward Hopper painting. The only light came from inside the café, where the men sat separated at the counter, nursing cups of coffee. I loved Hopper's paintings, the moodiness of people who were always alone even when they were together. Of streets that were dim and forever lonely. Why now? Why the Hopper mood? Did I suddenly sense that despite my eagerness and drive I faced a long and uncertain journey among strangers in a strange land with unknown perils ahead? Would I know the unexpected pain that my professor had warned me about? Was I anticipating that thick file of pages from the secret police that would eventually pin me like a bug in a specimen jar among millions of other jars? Of course not. The FBI never entered my mind, nor were they yet interested in me. Still, when I look at the file and find on the very first page that they knew or had learned that I was headed for number 7248 Sycamore Trail, Hollywood, it gives me a creepy feeling. Why was it important for them to record that this twenty-one-year-old arriving in Hollywood first resided at 7248 Sycamore Trail?

Finally, I connected with Julian. "Where are you?" he wanted to know. "I didn't expect you until tomorrow. I just moved today."

"Hollywood and Vine. On the corner with a big valise."

Julian soon arrived in the lumbering Nash coupe. Eventually I became fond of this overweight brute, even though it was one of the last models to feature cable-operated brakes (instead of hydraulic). Driving it in traffic was an adventure because no matter how hard one hit the brake pedal, it only eased to a stop, like a character from a less contentious time. But it actually had a rumble seat.

Less than a ten-minute drive from Hollywood and Vine, through the Cahuenga Pass, up Woodrow Wilson Drive, to the little wooded offshoot called Sycamore Trail, perched the rustic cottage Julian had found for \$25 a month. There was only one room, plus kitchen and bath. The porch had been glassed in so that it served as a bedroom for Julian, and I slept on the convertible sofa in the living room. It was a heady experience to come from the Bronx, where I had known only the confinement of apartments, to this world where my home sat in the midst of a

small garden. A splendid pepper tree leaned over us, its branches hanging down with fern-like leaves like the weeping willow I remembered in Central Park. And with the change of seasons, flowers actually popped up from their resting bulbs, purple iris blooms whose name I had to learn. A miracle: flowers of our own!

The next morning, windows opened onto a wide vista of mountains, stretching range after range through the mist and beyond the valley like the painting on a Chinese scroll. This exotic land offered infinite expanse and promise. Julian went to work in Republic's story department, leaving me in the cottage to contemplate my good fortune, the garden, the view and, of course, the problem of finding film work now that I was here.

Regarding the events at this time of my life, the FBI file is sadly inaccurate. It reports that I registered at the Selective Service Board in the Bronx on October 16, 1942, at an address in the Bronx (1). But, of course, by that time I was into my life in California. And I never did live at such an address in the Bronx. Further, it indicates (2) that I was classified 4-F on June 24, 1941, when actually I must have registered, and been examined, as I recall, in 1940 while I still lived in New York. The same page correctly reports that my classification was based on a finding of "valvular heart disease"—a rather alarming description of what I had always been told was a "heart murmur," which, I'm pleased to report, I have survived to this day.

The file goes on to list some interesting information that surprises me, but that I am prepared to accept as reasonably correct:

"From September of 1940 to April of 1941 he was a free lance writer in Hollywood." This is a typical Hollywood description of an unemployed wannabe. "From April of 1941 to August of 1941 he was a reader at Republic Studios." Possibly correct, though I don't recall this going on so long. "From August, 1941, to date he was employed by Paramount Pictures, Inc." (3).

Right and wrong, some of this trivia, collected at considerable cost by our intelligence service, does help to refresh my memory of events from more than sixty years ago.

Julian had been at Republic for seven or eight months. A convivial soul, he had made friends among the secretaries, was a favorite of the story editor, and had even become acquainted with some of the writers and producers who slaved away on Republic Westerns. He believed he had learned enough to understand how to write a script for someone like Gene Autry, the top star. This was not my notion of how to at-

tain the heights with Frank Capra (*Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*), John Ford (*Stagecoach*), or William Wyler (*Wuthering Heights*)—all recent Oscar nominees. But I was happy we had this inside connection to start us on our way. Julian and I worked out a story line, and I spent the days hammering out a screenplay on the old Royal typewriter I had shipped from New York. This consumed several months.

When we took time off from our labors, Julian drove us to the local beaches at Santa Monica and Manhattan Beach, where, winter or no, he plunged into the Pacific and swam out of sight as he had done for so many years during summers at Rockaway Beach in New York. Julian was a swimmer. I was a sinker. Much to his annoyance, I attributed his success in the water to a layer of blubber that I, at 127 pounds, clearly did not have. But I was content to enjoy the beach, wait for him to come in and dry off, then head back home with a stop at a barbecue place for grand Southern-style ribs. All new to me.

Our first spec script in Hollywood was rejected. To think that we couldn't even write a script for a Republic Western! But there was still so much to learn about writing for a star, for the sales department, and for the production department. We did learn eventually that the people in charge of sales and promotion actually produced at the beginning of each year a program (just titles!) that they then sold as a bloc to the theaters and chains. Thereafter, for the rest of the year, the studio had to come up with films to fit the titles. If one of the promised pictures was *Sierra Sue* for Roy Rogers, a film had to be written and produced to fit that title. Cinema! The art of the film!

After the failure of our Gene Autry script, I began to find work as an outside reader. In addition to the work of their regular readers, the studios farmed out books to "outsiders" to be read, synopsisized, and reported on forms provided by the studio. The going rate was five bucks a book. If the book wasn't too long, you could do the job in less than two days. With hard work, you could manage two or three jobs a week. Not a way to tap into the fabulous wealth of Hollywood, but it helped with the household budget. Besides, you got to know the heads of reading departments and might find an inside job.

California was inexpensive. We bought a bucket of small oranges at the market for a quarter. We never felt poor or deprived. We ate well despite my initial efforts at cooking pot roast. We felt so rich that we even managed a long July 4th-weekend trip to Ensenada, Mexico, my first venture outside the United States. This was just a few days after the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941. Having already crushed

Belgium, Holland, and France, Hitler seemed poised to quickly do the same to the more backward Soviet Union. When and how could he ever be stopped? But we were young. Ensenada was a blast, the first of many such excursions. Our only difficulty came at the U.S. Customs checkpoint on our return. We had purchased, as a souvenir, a small bottle of Mexican tequila for twenty-five cents. It was illegal to import liquor into California, so the tequila was confiscated, and we were threatened with dire punishment as lawbreakers before they allowed us to go on our way.

As noted in the file (2), the invasion of the USSR was followed two days later by my reporting to the local draft board, where I received another physical examination for the draft. Because of my heart murmur, I was classified 4-F. The United States was not at war, and like everyone else I knew, I had no wish to go into the army. I was relieved to be exempted from the draft.

If the file has the date right, Paramount Studios hired me as a staff reader in August 1941. I walked through the fabled Paramount gate to begin my real career in Hollywood. I would earn thirty-five dollars a week, which elevated my earning status over anything I had known before. We felt so prosperous that with a third friend, a fellow worker of Julian's at Republic, we rented a fine house out in the San Fernando Valley at the corner of Burbank Boulevard and Cantaloupe Street. The street was aptly named, because across the boulevard was a vast field covered with little paper "hats" protecting the young cantaloupes. In addition to three bedrooms and other interior amenities, the house boasted a lovely grassy patio with real banana trees growing against a white brick wall—all for \$75 a month. California! Looking back, it seems that the sun never set on that idyllic spot.

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It is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong.

VOLTAIRE

8. Paramount/Paradise

After an entire lifetime of aiming for Hollywood (I was now all of twenty-two), I had finally made it; I was walking through the Paramount gate on Marathon Street, where the guard now greeted me with a friendly smile; I was here where Ernst Lubitsch, who had recently completed *Ninotchka* with Greta Garbo, now worked, and where Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder, who had written the script for *Ninotchka*, were under contract. Here is where the current production of *Hold Back the Dawn* was being shot with Charles Boyer, Olivia de Havilland, and Paulette Goddard, and where Cecil B. DeMille held forth. Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, and Dorothy Lamour could be seen any day on one of the soundstages. How much better could it get? Sure, as a reader, I was low man on this totem pole, but no one seemed to know or care. I was just one of the guys who worked at Paramount.

Well, one man did look down on me. The man whose shoeshine stand was inside the gate and who had probably been there since the silent-film days did not try to conceal his disdain when I climbed up for a fifty-cent shine. After all, he had a pile of fine shoes from Crosby, Hope, and who knew how many other stars. How liberally did they pay him? He was canny enough to know who mattered in this zoo. Almost for spite, I'd get up on the seat and let him work on my obviously less expensive leather. But he was the exception.

In addition to the pleasures of being paid to enjoy myself on a major motion-picture lot, I was aware of other events transpiring in the outside world. France had fallen, and was now occupied by the Germans. England, suffering heavy bombardment virtually every night, was girding for a cross-channel invasion. Russia was reeling under the Panzer assault, its troops falling back more every day. Despite the German submarine threat, in August 1941 President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill met aboard warships in the North Atlantic and made arrangements to transfer vessels to Britain on a lend-lease basis. They also came up with the Atlantic Charter to give a better and more generous shape to the postwar world, whenever that might be. Because the United States was now helping guard shipments of goods to England, German submarines attacked and sank one of our naval escort vessels. This started an undeclared naval war in the Atlantic between the United States and Germany.

Despite the frightening threat of a Nazi takeover of all of Europe, the America First crowd, led by Joseph Kennedy, who had been our ambassador to England, and Charles Lindbergh, continued to insist this was not our war. The Japanese resolved the matter on December 7, 1941, when they attacked Pearl Harbor.

On that Sunday morning of December 7, Julian and I, along with our two girlfriends, and Ray Marcus, the friend who shared the house with us, were listening to the radio, Toscanini conducting a Beethoven symphony, when the news arrived. The next day at the studio, we heard Roosevelt address Congress and ask for a declaration of war against Japan. This was soon followed by a declaration of war against Germany.

We were now at war. My two roommates were soon drafted into the army, and I had to find new quarters. The first page of my file, dated December 14, 1944, lists a number of addresses for me. The first, on Sycamore Trail, is where I landed when I arrived in Hollywood in 1940 to live with Julian. But they seem to have missed the house in the valley at Burbank and Cantaloupe. Next, an address on Mulholland Drive, where I moved after Julian and Ray went into the army in 1942. This was more than two years before the FBI actively got on my tail in 1944, and presumably Special Agent (name blacked out) retrieved this address from the draft board, with which I was then keeping in touch. Apparently no detail, no matter how dated, is insignificant when pursuing someone classified as a threat to “domestic security.” This is what the number 100 means at the head of my file. I have puzzled long and hard to understand how I could have threatened domestic security other than by starting a revolution. Maybe that’s it. Were they afraid that I would at least participate in a revolution?

I had other problems to cope with first. My apartment on Mulholland was on a lower floor built into the hillside so that, in effect, a portion of it was not aboveground. For this reason, I presume, the local ants decided it was a suitable route to wherever they were headed — and back. These were not a few wandering ants in search of food scraps. This was a thick black moving column, more than an inch wide, on the march night and day around the walls of the single room. No army ever moved into battle so invincibly and with such determination. Even if I hadn’t been squeamish about crushing bugs, it was inconceivable that any physical attack would be effective. It was difficult to close my eyes and go to sleep with the thought uppermost that, hungry as they were, they might change course, come down off the walls, and march across my bed, leaving nothing but my skeleton wrapped in the tangled sheets.

Looking back, I realize that my intense distaste for these ants was unwarranted. They had no personal interest in me and certainly didn't consider me a threat to domestic security. Unlike the FBI, which would soon start a thick file about me with the dread number "100" at its head, the ants had a decent live-and-let-live attitude. But I was not yet trained as a warrior or revolutionary, so I took the coward's way and moved to a flat at 107 South Sweetzer Avenue, as is duly and frequently reported in my file.

Being a 4-F had clear advantages, but it was also embarrassing, like being labeled defective. But as the saying goes, I soldiered on . . . as a civilian. After I had been a reader for less than a year, one of the tasks I undertook as an obligation to make this a better world, not to threaten domestic security, was to accept the presidency of the Reader's Guild. The only reason I won this honor was that no one else cared to accept it. The FBI noted my new importance and reported it in a number of file pages even when, for good reason, I eventually resigned the post (37).

The guild was a polite association of eighty or ninety readers from the various studios. We had no contract with the employers. The wages were minimal, and there seemed little hope of getting a contract because, without any allies in the industry, we had no bargaining power. A strike was inconceivable. And, anyway, there were at least a million new college graduates each year who would give their eyeteeth for one of our reading jobs at a studio. Still, given the permissive atmosphere toward employees at the studios now that the war was on—and since the studios were awash with profits—I thought it might be possible to push for better wages and ancillary benefits like vacation time, sick leave, and pensions—the kind of benefits workers with good unions enjoyed.

How does an inexperienced kid go about getting a contract for his union? I had no idea, but I soon found I had some real help. By now I had a clear sense that some of my fellow readers were dedicated lefties. I don't recall that I had any reason to think of membership in the Communist Party until one of them approached me and suggested that I join. Well! It was one of those moments in life when I had a great decision to make . . . like getting married, or jumping out of a plane and hoping the parachute will open. War or no war, here I was, fulfilling my heart's desire in Hollywood, working at Paramount, reading books, stories, scripts, trying to find gems for the studio's program. I felt certain that in time I would move to one of those bungalows or offices where producers or contract writers worked. Why then, with all this before me, would a twenty-two-year-old join the Communist Party?

Looking back across all those years as honestly as I can, I believe that the driving motive was my guilt for remaining comfortably at home while so many people suffered and died, while my friends and others were in the armed forces, putting their lives on the line fighting the Nazis and the Japanese. What right did I have to worry about whatever risks might be involved in joining the Party? Surely guilt was a factor, but there were sensible considerations, too. My first feeble objection was “what about the rotten Soviet-Nazi pact” Stalin had made? But I already knew the answer to that. Stalin did what he had to do to prepare for the German assault he knew was coming. And come it did. Now the Soviets were the only ones truly fighting back against Hitler. America was allied with the Soviets in the war, and we were risking ships and lives to send whatever help we could to stem the German tide. Though we did not then know the figures, we knew they were impressive, and now we know what they were: 6,430 planes, 3,734 tanks, 104 ships and boats, 210,000 autos, 3,000 antiaircraft guns, 245,000 field telephones, gasoline, aluminum, copper, zinc, steel, and five million tons of food, enough to feed an army of twelve million for every day of the war. Britain and Canada supplied equivalent amounts, according to their ability. Perhaps it is difficult to realize today that the Soviets were our principal ally, not our enemy.

There was still another reason. It's not necessary for me to recapitulate my own experiences of living through an awful economic depression that was only resolved with the coming of war. Perhaps it is useful to relay the thinking of someone who was not and never became a member of the Party, but was a distinguished and highly regarded liberal of the period. Arthur Garfield Hayes was the chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union, and in his testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1948, he said:

“I think . . . the Communists do one thing valuable in this country: that is, they are gadflies. Whatever their purpose may be, they have been fighting the cause of all mean injustices in the United States, starting with the Sacco-Vanzetti case, then the Scottsboro case, then cases of workingmen all over the country, fighting against Negro oppression in the South—and all the way through they have done a job that the rest of us ought to do and, so long as we ignored it, we give the Communists arguments. I think it is very fortunate that we have some people in this country who do wake up the public mind to these injustices” (quoted in *Films on the Left* by William Alexander, Princeton University Press [1981], pp. 183–184).

I joined (14-19, and throughout the rest of the file). Also, according to the file, “an informant advised that he believes that GORDON is in favor of the Communist Party being in control of the United States” (14). Well, as you must be aware, I failed miserably at that. Curiously, the file was not begun until 1944, even though I joined the Party in 1942. Perhaps the bureau has deliberately omitted sending me any earlier pages, or was the FBI slow to catch up with my delinquency?

But back to 1942. I was now actually, actively, definitively, and undeniably a member of the Party. The file states conclusively that although someone “has no definite information that GORDON is a member of the Communist Party, he has concluded in his own mind from the actions of GORDON, that GORDON was attending meetings of some organization, the name of which GORDON would not state, and which [BLACKED OUT] believes was a [BLACKED OUT]” (17). After about a dozen more blacked-out lines, the informant “advised that GORDON [TWO LINES BLACKED OUT] mind, there is no question but that GORDON would be in favor of whatever means would be proposed by the Communist Party to secure control of the United States Government.” Well, reading the often idiotic stories submitted to the studio could get boring, so why not stir up a bit of excitement by “securing control of the United States Government?” I have wondered about the identity of that curiously informed informant. Another bored reader, perhaps?

As to who or what a Communist actually is, someone informed the bureau in 1949 that the “definition of a Communist is that anyone who is a member of the Communist Party of the United States . . .” (5). Glad we got that straightened out.

There are more specific and repeated references to my membership in one “branch” or another of the CP, plus a mention of my being “a leader of the Screen Analysts Guild” (16).

Page 38 recapitulates some of my work history, acknowledges that I am a citizen, lists me as labor chairman of “Branch H.”

Agents had even trailed me to an address (blacked out) and noted conscientiously that my car, an awful 1938 tomato-red Chevy coupe, bore license-plate number 7 C 4382 (5). You can imagine what a relief it is for me finally, after sixty years, to have this number recalled.

An item on another page piques my curiosity: “. . . on August 7, 1944 at which time they met for lunch.” Who was I having lunch with? That’s blacked out. Could it have been a girl I was on the make for? What restaurant? What did we have for lunch? Who picked up the

check? All this must have been significant to be reported and recorded in an FBI file. Could we have been plotting to take over the United States government?

Note: Because of the totally indiscriminate fashion in which the file pages were delivered to me, without regard to dates or continuity, and because of the necessity of rearranging them in a kind of order that will conform to the narrative chronology, it was almost inevitable that a page or two would become lost along the way. Thus, I cannot now locate the file page with the item about being seen having lunch with someone. It would be simple to drop the reference, which doesn't shed any special illumination on the spying by the bureau. But I do cherish the fact that they even intruded on my lunch date. So I beg the reader to accept my word that that item appears somewhere in the file as quoted: "... on August 7, 1944 at which time they met for lunch."

"Informant observed GORDON is intelligent and capable and would do anything in his power to further the Communist cause" (24). I wish I knew who that ardent admirer was. The same page goes on to note that I was a subscriber to the *Daily People's World*. Is it really the proper business of the FBI to check on a citizen's subscriptions? The fact that I was a citizen is affirmed on a number of pages; one (37) reports, "Subject is a citizen of the United States inasmuch as he was born in this country." I sense from the construction of the sentence that the agent only grudgingly admitted that, having been born here, I had to be considered a citizen.

I find it interesting that so many agents on so many different occasions found it useful to report to the "Director", i.e., J. Edgar Hoover, that I was indeed involved with the Communist Party. It makes me wonder what would have happened in the 1770s if old King George III (not George II) had had Hoover working for him. Paul Revere would have had quite a file; and the troublemakers who signed the Declaration of Independence would all have been in deep doo-doo.

There is a 1945 letter from the Director himself specifying in minute detail that a 5" × 8" white card, correctly captioned, be prepared in my honor (12). In 1948 Hoover instructs that the Security Index card be cancelled in the event that I cannot "be considered a threat to the internal security of this country" (11). Can it be that I have become clean? Confusion reigns. By 1950, the SAC (special agent in charge) of Los Angeles indeed recommends that since I am unemployed and not active with Communist Party, my Security Index card be canceled (13). So why do agents continue to follow me for another four hundred pages?

If there is anything the FBI doesn't already know about the inner workings of the Party, here it is: What did being a Party member really involve? For the FBI or anyone else anticipating delicious disclosures of clandestine activities, I have only disappointment to offer. Each week, eight or ten of us, all readers, met during the evening at the home of one of the members. We were the only Communists any of us actually knew. Why the secrecy if what we were doing was perfectly legal? First, because by long tradition, people with our label were thought to be wild-eyed, unshaven, unwashed, and dangerous radicals. I promise you that none of this was true. People who know me today will verify that even in my dotage I bathe and shave almost as regularly as most Democrats or Republicans. But truth has very little influence on preconceived notions. Apart from obloquy, the much more serious matter was that, in most cases, if we publicly acknowledged our politics, even in those days before the cold war, we would likely have been fired and unable to find another job. At the very least, as the number 100 on our FBI files confirms, our respected intelligence agency regarded us as threats to "domestic security," which would have been enough in most cases to justify terminating our employment.

Each group that got together like ours was called a club, never the more ominous term, "cell." A chairman (this was before the enlightened era of chairpersons), democratically elected by the group, conducted the meeting and tried to keep track of who attended and who did not; an educational director sold the nominally priced pamphlets that seemed to show up at every meeting. The pamphlets were either about Marxism or about the history of the movement. The idea was to train us to be good Marxists who understood the economic, social, and cultural principles enunciated by Marx, Engels, and others who developed the ideas of "scientific socialism."

According to this school of thought, society evolved through the changing means of production from primitive hunting-and-gathering groups to the more settled societies that came about with the development of agriculture. Political changes naturally followed changes in production, and society became organized with rulers (kings, etc.) and so on through successive periods of change: mercantilism, the invention of steam power, harnessing electricity, early capitalism, and finance capitalism, which is where we are now, or were in 1942. This "scientific" concept explains why political changes occur naturally and more or less inevitably, why there is an automatic evolution from one type of societal organization to the next.

Finally, after the development of new and powerful means of production that would make it possible to provide enough for everyone, the final stage, socialism, would appear, causing the class struggle to disappear and war and other evils, like racism, to evaporate (since they would no longer serve any economic function). Thereafter, we would live an ideal life: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." It seemed to us a beautiful and simple concept. And we were happy to consider ourselves a vanguard that understood this and would help lead our society to such a nirvana.

I am not a serious student of economics, and I confess with some embarrassment that I have never cracked that impenetrable volume of Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, the basic work of the daddy of us all. Nor, for that matter, do I know any other Party member who has taken that heavy book off the shelf. Still, I did enjoy and find useful some of the basic concepts of Marxism about the nature of our economy. It seemed worthwhile then, and does now, to understand why we alternate periods of prosperity and depression. In the simplest terms, the profit-making system, always seeking to earn greater profits, invests more and more capital in production during periods of prosperity, until there is too much invested in new plants, production facilities, and hiring more workers. Overproduction, not enough demand for what is produced, results. Workers are laid off, enterprises fail, production plummets. The economy tanks. This persists until a new equilibrium evolves.

The very best way, the classic way, to offset the dire effects of overproduction is to go to war. All the factories rev up to produce war materiel, which is consumed relentlessly in battle. Employment swells; profits expand. Best of all, the product does not go onto the consumer market to create further overproduction. Prosperity, the good phase of the economic cycle, gets going. Employers are happy, investors are happy, even workers are happy . . . if they are not out there killing and being killed. The system flourishes through another cycle. This concept, so basic and simple, seems elementary today, and is accepted by economists and scholars the world over. But evidently it took Karl Marx to understand the process and explain the vicious cycle of prosperity, depression, and war that he considered central to the capitalist system.

All this was expressed more simply and elegantly by John Maynard Keynes, the great British economist who did more than any other man to save the capitalist system from itself. No Communist, he. But he could look truth in the face: "Capitalism is the extraordinary belief that the

nastiest of men, for the nastiest of reasons, will somehow work for the benefit of us all.” Clearly, he was also a very good writer.

During the war, the Party was committed to a united-front position of supporting any group that supported the war effort, and did not run Party candidates for office. When Franklin Roosevelt ran for another term of office in 1944, we were out on the streets working for *his* reelection. I developed a real dislike of knocking on doors and having them slammed in my face. To this day I find it difficult to turn away people from my door, even when they are trying to turn me into a good member of the Hare Krishnas.

We had the problems of the world heaped on us, and there wasn't much that we could do about them. Going to meetings was like going to the gym: we had paid our fee with the best intentions, and so we felt we had to go, but we really hated the exercises.

In some instances we did fight for justice for victimized minorities. These included Filipinos, who were subjected to brutal rules of existence. For example, California law forbade them to marry *anyone* on threat of jailing and deportation. They were good enough only to do the dirty work of cleaning sardines in our fisheries, preparing them for the cannery, and getting sex, if at all, from the hookers around the port. The same strictures applied to the Chinese who, historically, had been brought over here to build the railroads and, hopefully, drop dead just after hammering in the last spike. Drop dead many of them did with a hammer in their hands. Many were also slaughtered and buried anonymously in common graves that are still being turned up today.

During the war years in California, the principal victims were Latinos. One particularly egregious instance was what became known as the Sleepy Lagoon case. Railroaded by the police and courts, a group of young Latino men were accused of murder, indicted, and sentenced. The Latinos were labeled “zoot suiters,” a term of contempt and opprobrium. This was almost exactly a repeat of the old Scottsboro case of the 1930s, when a group of young Negro men were convicted of rape in the South. In the Sleepy Lagoon case, the Party played a very active role in publicizing the injustice of the matter. One of our Party members, Guy Endore, who was a distinguished novelist and screenwriter, wrote a pamphlet exposing the entire brutal frame-up. We distributed the pamphlet widely and carried on a campaign. As in the Scottsboro affair, the Party played an active and crucial role. Eventually, after the victims of injustice had been imprisoned for two years and after a series

of appeals fought by progressive (read: Communist) attorneys, the convictions were reversed and the men were freed. I mention all of this in some detail as an example of the useful work done by the Party.

Perhaps the most significant work of the Party in 1930s Hollywood was the struggle to organize trade unions for the writers, actors, and directors. It took years of battling determined studio employers, who used every device, including blacklisting, to resist the move to unionize. For example, the first presidents of the Writers Guild were known Party members.

It is painful to recall that in one instance the Party did not oppose an act of racism. The roundup and incarceration of thousands of Japanese, many of them American citizens, was one of the truly brutal mass violations of civil liberties in our entire history. Party members, like almost everyone else from the president on down, were so caught up in the jingoistic atmosphere after Pearl Harbor that this treatment of peaceful and patriotic Americans was almost universally accepted. When war fever rages, constitutional guarantees go out the window. The Party, which had itself suffered from such treatment, should have known better. I believe the same thing is happening today with the jailing of hundreds of people of Arab descent accused of no crimes.

Back in 1942, since seizing control of the government wasn't on my personal agenda, I was very busy as president of the Reader's Guild, trying to secure a contract for the readers (16, 37).

By now I had been promoted to assistant story editor. My job was to study the hundreds of stories and scripts, both produced and unproduced, in the voluminous archives for projects that might be considered for new productions, either remakes or previously overlooked stories. Since file cabinets contained over 1600 such stories, books, and scripts, this was a job that could have kept me busy for a lifetime. Despite my modest promotion, which lifted me out of the reader category and therefore out of the Reader's Guild, my boss, the story editor William Dozier, gave me permission to continue my work as a negotiator for a contract for the guild.

My new position is noted "as one of the heads of the Story Department" (38), which suggests something grander than it was. Nevertheless, the position did put me in touch with many of the contract producers, who were always glad to discuss any proposal for a film project. I even recall once meeting with Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder, who were still working together. They were polite, but not interested in any of my suggestions. Another producer with whom I had a productive

relationship told me that he had spoken to the powers upstairs about considering me as a producer. This proposal came to naught. I thought I knew why.

I was still negotiating for the guild when it gained clout by joining the Conference of Studio Unions, a progressive group headed by a man named Herb Sorrel. He had become a thorn in the side of the producers because he was organizing a movement to create unions independent of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). The latter was a sweetheart union that always played ball with the producers, who used it to control the motion-picture workers for the producers' own advantage. It had a long unsavory history of gangster connections and the conviction and jailing of both IATSE leaders and studio heads—but that is not our story.

Herb Sorrel and his Conference of Studio Unions, the CSU, emerged during the war to introduce honest and militant trade unionism into Hollywood. They were labeled Communist, which certainly was not true; it was the age-old tactic of turning members of an unwelcome group into pariahs. Or, put another way, it was a label for a union group that could not be bribed and bought off. Were Communists involved? Yes. Were they in control? No. The CSU locals included the painters (headed by Sorrel), the art directors, lab workers, screen office employees, several others, and the readers.

My involvement with the CSU is noted (37). A number of minor points are inaccurate, but when it states that “subject was formerly the president of the Screen Readers Guild and that he was chairman of the Negotiations Committee for new contracts for the screen readers,” it correctly quotes the trade paper *Variety*. Actually, these were negotiations for all the CSU unions; I was there to represent the readers. At one point during the negotiations, I noticed that Charles Boren, head of labor relations for Paramount Studios, was passing around a scrap of paper to his studio buddies. I learned later that the paper had a crude drawing of a hammer and sickle. Boren was labeling me. And he was the executive responsible for labor relations at Paramount.

It is useful to note here that despite repeated references in the file to my importance in labor union activities, especially regarding the Conference of Studio Unions, I was the smallest of small fry as a negotiator for the Screen Readers Guild, now the Screen Story Analysts, and that I never personally met Herb Sorrel, the big cheese, except at that one meeting with the Producers Association. Apparently it was useful for the informers and the agents reporting on me to exaggerate my impor-

tance in order justify their own role. Haven't we more recently learned that this is what happened regularly with the KGB, the Gestapo, and other secret police agencies when reporting on their subjects?

It may appear from all of the above that I am misrepresenting the truth about the Communist Party, presenting it as an innocuous organization interested only in promoting honest trade unionism, winning the war against Hitler, agitating against racism (usually), and opposing an economy that made the rich richer while warehousing the poor, the blacks, and the Latinos in prison. If such an acceptable liberal program were all that the Party was about, why did the FBI, the CIA, the State Department, and who knows what other intelligence agencies pursue me night and day for more than twenty-five years? Were they lunatics?

To answer this question, it will be useful to go back a few years. In 1848, Karl Marx and Frederic Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto*, which opened with the ringing line "A spectre is haunting Europe." And, yes, it's true we believed that a society based on the private ownership of the means of production inevitably results in a world where the rich float on golden parachutes and the poor are likely to be beaten up by the police; that racism was a way of exploiting the poorest groups of workers, including the even poorer classes in underdeveloped countries; that competition for control of the wealth from "backward" countries results in wars fought by—guess whom?

We believed that all of this had to change before we would know a peaceful world of equality, freedom, and prosperity for all. Was this another impossible dream? Perhaps, but many of the principles were already widely adopted throughout the world, wherever there was public ownership of great enterprises like the Tennessee Valley Authority, with its dams and watershed and power production and distribution. In New York, the subways had been built and owned by the municipality, and this had made it possible for me to live happily in the Bronx and court a girl who lived in faraway Brooklyn. All for a nickel. In a number of countries, especially in Scandinavia, innovative social programs had ameliorated the worst conditions of the working class and had inhibited exploitation by the capitalists. Much of this came about as a result of developing "socialist" ideas that certainly went back to Marx's "communist" program.

What about violence? Did we advocate achieving this happy-ever-after land by violently overthrowing the government? Look at the record in our own country. Who initiated the violence that caused the death of

auto workers in Detroit when the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was being organized in 1934? Who shot down striking miners in Pennsylvania? Who hanged striking railroad workers in Chicago, or executed innocent radicals like Sacco and Vanzetti? Why would the working class use violence to achieve its legitimate ends if they could be attained peacefully? As my old history professor in high school taught us, the bourgeoisie would rather lose their lives than their property. Violence comes from the side that resists political and social change, not from the side that wants it.

The charge of Communist violence is a phantom that will not be stilled because a spectre is still haunting the people who truly own this country. And J. Edgar Hoover certainly identified with them, not with the working people of America. I doubt that he pursued me for twenty-six years because he thought I had broken any laws. If I had, I would have been jailed faster than you can come up with the first name of J. Edgar Hoover.

Maybe Hoover was a bit loony; maybe he was drunk with power; maybe, with his access to secret personal information, he was able to blackmail political leaders up to the highest level, as has been alleged. But none of this sufficiently explains how he was able to hold onto his unrestrained grip on power for over fifty years. As with Hoover and the FBI, it is typical for the heads of secret police everywhere to run one-man shows and continue in power indefinitely—for a reason. This was true of Mielke in East Berlin, who ran the Stasi from 1957 until the end in 1989. It was true of Dzerzhinsky, who organized the Cheka in the USSR and whose statue was erected before the principal prison of Moscow. It was true of Himmler, Hitler's trustworthy deputy who ran the Gestapo from beginning to end. These men reached their positions and stayed there because they served the ruling powers in each country.

Could the same thing be true of a democracy like ours? What and whose interests could Hoover have served? It may come across as crude left-wing propaganda if the answer comes from me. So, let me quote someone a bit less to the left than I. Michael Moore, in his recent documentary, *Bowling for Columbine*, lists the following events of the past fifty years (my supplements added in brackets):

1953: Mossadeq of Iran, democratically elected but planning to nationalize the oil industry, overthrown with the connivance of the CIA, replaced by the Shah of Iran. [A brutal dictator who imprisoned, tor-

tured, and executed hundreds of thousands. His eventual overthrow resulted in the siege of the American Embassy and the rule of the religious right. Did America have any responsibility in this?]

1954: Arbenz, democratically elected president of Guatemala, was ousted forcibly by the military, again with the help and financing of the CIA, when he planned to distribute land to the peasants. 200,000 civilians were butchered. [And to this day the country remains under the control of the right wing, which is careful to preserve American agricultural interests in the “banana republic.”]

1963–1975: Four million killed in Southeast Asia. [Presumably this includes two million dead Vietnamese; one million Indonesians who were slaughtered; two million brutally tortured and killed by the Pol Pot in Cambodia with the assistance and support of the American military. This already adds up to more than four million and omits many more.] Are we counting?

1977: El Salvador. 70,000 killed. [Does anyone seriously question the role of the United States in this?]

1980: U.S. trains Osama and the Taliban to kill Russians, supplies anti-aircraft guns, other weapons, contributes three billion dollars to support them.

1981: Reagan administration trains and equips contras. 30,000 more casualties.

1982: Saddam Hussein is supported in his struggle with Iran. [We contribute tanks, heavy guns, materials for poison gas, other arms, and billions more dollars to help Hussein.]

1989: Invasion of Panama and capture of our own CIA agent, Manuel Noriega, with 3,000 Panamanian casualties.

1991: War on Iraq. After which U.S. reinstalls Kuwaiti dictator.

1998: Clinton bombs aspirin factory in Sudan. Civilian casualties.

Moore modestly omits many other instances of our leaders’ building the “American Century” and fighting to protect and extend the profits of American oil, mining, and agricultural companies. In Africa, these instances include the murder of Lumumba of the Republic of the Congo by Mobutu; the unbelievable butchery perpetrated by Idi Amin in Uganda, and by the Hutus against the Tutsis in Rwanda. Did we play a role in these massacres? Did we support the dictators or just stand by and fail to intervene? What about in Caribbean countries like Haiti, where our man Papa Doc ruled with his murderous police?

And what about the murder of Allende in Chile and the installation of Pinochet? And all that happened with the desaparecidos who were dropped half dead into the sea? By now this has all been documented. Were we involved? Ask Kissinger.

But this is the short list. Many books have been written about American support and connivance on behalf of the world's most brutal dictators, books written by "respectable" reporters and researchers, not by left-wing critics. No matter how unarguable this information, most of it does not filter through to the American public. Americans have remained silent in the face of a consistent policy of brutal and ruthless domination in every corner of the globe, not only because of ignorance, but because people who speak out effectively, the dissenters, have been silenced and cowed by the John Foster Dulleses, the Henry Kissingers, and, most of all, by the J. Edgar Hoovers. To criticize American policy has meant being labeled unpatriotic, even subversive. Ask Joe McCarthy. Ask President Bush or Attorney General Ashcroft. Ask me.

Ask the Brazilian television producer who came with a crew to interview me during the protest against the awarding of an honorary Academy Award to Elia Kazan. She listened to my stories of blacklisting, nodded her head in sympathy, then broke into tears because she realized that she was talking to an American who could understand and sympathize. "You can't know how much worse it was in Brazil under a military dictatorship which was supported by the Americans, the imprisonment of all opposition, the torture and executions."

All this to make an obvious point. Secret police forces worldwide serve a single purpose: to silence opposition and support those in power. That is their function; that is why they survive. That is why Hoover created miles of files on people like me. Hoover was not a lunatic.

His personally signed (or stamped) directive (12) to an SAC to prepare a white, 5" × 8" security index card, file number 100-335648, was not, in the world of domestic espionage, an irrational act. This number followed me for twenty-six years. I suppose it's still there, and it feels to me rather like the tattoo on an inmate at Auschwitz.

One other issue is worth considering. Were we completely and uncritically devoted to the Soviet Union? Yes, we were, and about this I believe the Party must be criticized. We believed that our cherished goal of socialism and a classless society was finally being achieved in the USSR, the country where Lincoln Steffens had "seen the future; and it works." Well, you can't always be right. We believed that the country had to be

supported against all the violence that had opposed it from its very first days. It was then easy to believe that the horror stories about Stalin were manufactured to order by our own media moguls like Hearst and Henry Luce of *Time* magazine. The fact that Stalin was a monster in a class with Hitler did not come out convincingly until Khrushchev told the story in the 1950s, after which most of us fell away from the Party. I regret that it was only then that I learned the axiom of Lord Acton, who said, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." I didn't quit the Party formally. It wasn't done that way. Like all of my friends, I just stopped going to meetings, and no one came around to ask me why.

But suppose we had known about Stalinism during World War II. Would it have been wise, patriotic, or useful for America and the West to permit Hitler to destroy the Soviets? Were Roosevelt and Churchill wrong to support Stalin then? Would America had been better off if Hitler had vanquished the Soviets, then turned full force against the rest of us?

The file reports that I subscribed to a plan to run advertising in the local newspapers demanding a second front to the war (15). That is true. We believed it was necessary to preserve the Soviet Union, and this was partly because of our heavy emotional investment in that country. It is also true that we were not alone in believing that a second front was desirable for dividing Hitler's forces and helping guarantee a successful end to the war. Many Americans joined in that demand. Even General Eisenhower came around to believing that, but only after tens of millions in the USSR had been slaughtered and the Red armies were well on their way to Berlin. Did my call for a second front in 1944 involve a threat to "domestic security"?

In any case, it gets down to this: Given the above explanation of the beliefs and *activities* of the Party, did I have the right as an American citizen to believe what I did, to act on the program of the Party as described, and to do all this, right or wrong, without being subject to day-and-night surveillance by the FBI, here and abroad, for so many years, as though I were an enemy of the state? Do the freedoms of speech and association about which we constantly boast mean freedom only for the people with whom we agree, or, more meaningfully, also for people with whom we disagree?

The state of Oregon has a law pertaining to all of this. For the purpose of full disclosure to the FBI and the State Department, let me note that Oregon is one of our fifty states, located just north of California on

the Pacific Coast. It was admitted to the Union in 1859 as the thirty-third state. The state flower is the Oregon grape; the state bird is the western meadowlark. There is nothing especially subversive in Oregon to attract the attention of the FBI, though Attorney General Ashcroft has seen fit to file a lawsuit against the state for its law decriminalizing euthanasia. Here is the pertinent Oregon law (ORS 181.575):

No law enforcement agency . . . may collect or maintain information about the political, religious or social views, associations or activities of any individual, group, [or] association . . . unless such information directly relates to an investigation of criminal activities, and there are reasonable grounds to suspect the subject of the information is or may be involved in criminal conduct.

The Oregon Trail, anyone?

He who joyfully marches to music in rank and file has already earned my contempt. He has been given a large brain by mistake, since for him the spinal cord would fully suffice. This disgrace to civilization should be done away with at once. Heroism at command, senseless brutality, deplorable patriotism, how violently I hate all this.

ALBERT EINSTEIN, *Ideas and Opinions*, 1954

9. Career on Hold

Racism, to be sure, was not exclusively a practice of the Los Angeles Police Department. The trade unions were segregated. Even the musicians union, with so many great Negro artists, was organized with separate black and white locals. The American armed services were segregated, blacks being restricted to either driving trucks through the European war zones or cooking meals and washing dishes below decks in the navy. Fortunately, it turned out that blacks were good drivers and good cooks. Here in Hollywood, where blacks played only subservient or comic roles in films, a problem arose when the doors were flung open to servicemen at the Hollywood Canteen.

Jean Lewin, a young woman whom I had been dating—and whom I subsequently married—was executive secretary of the canteen. As a member of the Screen Office Employees Guild, she had been at the heart of organizing the canteen, and had then been hired to oversee the operation, keeping it functioning seven nights a week through all the months and years of the war.

Though she worked with film stars like Bette Davis, who was president of the canteen corporation, and Jules Stein, head of the powerful MCA agency and treasurer and fund-raiser for the canteen, it was Jean who had the day-to-day responsibility of making sure that there were bands for every session, food, drink, entertainers, female dance partners, light, heat, and even grand pianos when needed. Like me, she had joined the Communist Party. When the issue of segregation rose, she knew, like any good Communist, where she stood. But the Hollywood moguls who appreciated the national publicity that went with the canteen were terrified at the prospect of racial mixing, especially on the dance floor. What would America think if there were photos of a black man dancing with a white movie star . . . even though most of the hostesses who danced with the men were not movie stars, not even movie extras, but women recruited from among the secretaries, readers, wardrobe workers, and others outside the industry. Such publicity might mean the end of Hollywood. Boycotts. No one would ever go to the movies again.

It was a tough battle, pitting Jean, all five feet, one hundred pounds of her, against some real heavyweights. But with what little help we could

give her from the outside, and also from a few film stars, like John Garfield, who were with us, she finally achieved a significant victory. The policy put in place stated that no hostess was required to dance with any man unless she agreed. She might refuse because the man was too tall, too short, too hairy, too bald, or too sweaty, without reference to race. There was no blatant racism. Considering the tens of thousands of men from every state who attended each month and witnessed relaxed racial mixing, I have often thought that the canteen accomplished something worthwhile toward the eventual improvement of race relations in our country.

Given these activities, did Jean merit an FBI file, too? Was she also a threat to the security of our country? I don't know, and applying for one now would involve a four- or five-year wait, as happened with mine. However, I have learned that the intelligence services did not ignore her. In Gerald Horne's book, *Class Struggle in Hollywood, 1930-1950*, he reports: "Jean Lewin, a member of the Screen Office Employees Guild and 'possibly' a Communist, 'Upon several occasions defended mixed dancing between negroes and white persons at the Canteen'" (U.S. Senate, Internal Security Subcommittee, Van Deman Collection). I expect that my wife, who died in 1995, would be pleased to know that she had not been ignored by our vigilant security police. But thanks to the FBI's invariable practice, Jean's name does not appear once in my copy of the file, not as Jean Lewin or Jean Gordon. Without a doubt she is included, but has been blacked out.

Through a fortunate circumstance, I have only recently come into possession of an FBI file devoted to the Hollywood Canteen. A professor at the University of Kansas, Sherrie Tucker, who is writing a book about the history of racism at the canteen, came to Los Angeles to interview me. She had read my book *Hollywood Exile, or, How I Learned to Love the Blacklist*, in which I relate this history at some length. Subsequently, she sent me a copy of the FBI file she had obtained with the help of her researcher, Tami Albin. I find it interesting to pore through the pages (almost one hundred) and note that virtually every one of them deals with nothing but the idea of racial mixing at the canteen. It is also instructive to find that on the board of directors of the canteen there was an FBI informer who reported to the bureau with unvarying concern about the race question.

For convenient reference, I quote a sentence or two from each page, but the reader may find it of value to read each page more fully. (To distinguish them from my own file pages, these are labeled C1-C9.)

“The Board of Directors of the HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN met on March 22, 1943. The matter of white girls dancing with Negro soldiers and Negro girls dancing with white soldiers came up for discussion and disposition” (C1). And much more — read on.

“FLORENCE CADIZ stated in a later argument that JOHN GARFIELD, screen actor, at previous meetings had favored mixed dancing. Mr. JULES STEIN stated to [BLACKED OUT] later that in his opinion the situation was becoming acute and that one of these days there would be a serious race riot at the Canteen” (C2).

“It is also desired that in connection with the above-captioned matter, you submit an investigative report setting forth that information contained in your files reflecting Communist Party affiliations or sympathies on the part of individuals connected with the Hollywood canteen” (C3). Instructions, no doubt, to a local FBI agent. This concern also constantly recurs.

After five interesting paragraphs: “Source stated that about two months ago at one of the Board meetings, DALTON TRUMBO, the writer, and CARROLL HOLLISTER, the radio musician, who are members of the Board of Directors of the Canteen, had endeavored to prevail upon the other members of the Board to permit colored soldiers to dance with white hostesses at the Hollywood Canteen” (C4).

“. . . Mr. STEIN had stated that the FBI had somebody at the former Board meeting and that the FBI was definitely interested in Communist activities in the motion picture industry. . . . the Board received a letter from the Screen Readers Guild in which it was stated that members of the Guild hoped there would be no racial discrimination at the Hollywood Canteen” (C5). Yes, that was from me at the Reader’s Guild. Guilty.

“[BLACKED OUT] has stated that JEAN LEWIN is the present Secretary of the Hollywood Canteen; that she is a member of the Screen Office Employees Guild; and is very active in both the Canteen and the Guild; that she is a consistent [BLACKED OUT] but this is not known to be fact” (C6). Yes, it was a fact.

Much more on this page about important writers like Dalton Trumbo and Donald Ogden Stewart.

“. . . by the Communist faction on the Executive Board to make mixed dancing mandatory on the part of the hostesses, but this caused dissension among the board members, and it has now been decided as above” (C7). Decision was as I described above, to permit each hostess to decide for herself without regard to race. Also from this page: “The

one millionth member of the armed forces has now passed through the doors of the CANTEEN.”

“The question of mixed dancing by white and colored persons has not come to a final conclusion, but it has been voted by the Executive Board that this matter be permitted to remain as it has been, that is, a matter of personal choice” (C8). Etc., etc.

“The campaign by certain members of the Executive Board of the HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN to compel all persons participating in its activities to embrace the ‘Equality of Races’ program has subsided” (C9). Note also on this page the claim that by February 22, 1945, “more than two million persons in military uniform have passed through the doors of the Canteen.”

So right down to the end of the war in 1945 and the eventual closing of the canteen, the FBI never abandoned its relentless concern with the problem of whether blacks might dance with whites or, of course, with the matter of how Communists were a threat to the security of our country at the Hollywood Canteen.

The file mentions a “secret meeting of communists concerned in a recent motion picture strike. . . . Subject [that’s me] was observed entering this meeting. This strike was called by [BLACKED OUT] of the Conference of Studio Unions . . .” (??). The use of the term “secret” strikes me as another example of the kind of lunacy that prevailed at the FBI. Of course, meetings of the Party were not open to the public. Neither are meetings of most trade unions, tenant committees of condominiums, closed meetings of congressional committees, or probably even meetings of the golf club to which the FBI agent might belong. But the use of the word “secret” describes an ominous and threatening event. The FBI agent reporting this event is wasting his time, once again, reporting the same old Party meeting that is referred to dozens of times throughout the file.

Was there such a meeting? I don’t recall it, but there probably was, since the Party was caught between a rock and a hard place when Herb Sorrel, fed up with studio stalling about contracts, finally decided to call a strike. The Party’s public and emphatic position during the war was that strikes and other labor actions, no matter how justified, had to be postponed. Winning the war came first. But supporting trade unions, especially progressive ones like the CSU, where many of our own members were involved, was almost our most basic principle and duty. What was to be done? If we had been asked whether to strike or not, we would have voted to postpone such action until after the war, but we weren’t

consulted. A strike was on, and we certainly had to support the workers and their unions. We did.

However, my own position was ticklish. After years of leading the readers, I was now no longer a member of that guild or any union. I was an assistant story editor, technically a member of management. If I should join the strike and the picket line, I would do so as an individual, not as the member of a union. No matter how the strike might end, I would not be protected by the union and would be out of work—for good. Do I walk through the picket line outside the studio, a line where my former colleagues are finally fighting for the contract I worked so long and hard to achieve? I decided to put the matter to the board of the guild and agreed to do whatever they decided. They voted unanimously for me to continue working at the studio, even as did other sympathetic workers like the writers, whose union was not on strike.

My bosses understood that I was not expected to scab and do any of the work of the readers during the strike. This was respected. Actually, I did little work of any kind during the slowdown inside the studio. I wandered around, chatted with sympathetic writers who had offices in the same building, and most especially went to our file room, where I normally had legitimate business. It occupied a corner on the second floor and faced out onto the street, where the picketing could be seen. The studio had arranged to set up a film camera and crew to record the picket line and the identity of everyone on it. What possible use this would have I didn't, and don't, know. But it seemed like such a dirty trick, like an FBI record of everyone involved, which might someday be useful against any union activist.

In order to justify my presence there and avoid suspicion, I rummaged through file drawers as if in search of more stories and scripts for the producers. I stumbled across an interesting file. Several "stories" submitted by J. Edgar Hoover. Himself. These were filed among the stories purchased but not produced. Clearly, Hoover was being paid off by the studio. For what? Presumably for being one of their favorite authors. And if Paramount was paying him off, how many other studios were doing the same? As I watched the studio cameramen photographing the pickets below, I was reminded of all the stories about Hoover's corruption, like the well-known rumor that he was a compulsive gambler, betting on the horses. It had also been believably alleged that he had Mafia contacts who tipped him off to fixed races. But probably even he was unable to arrange a fix that would always keep him from losing. If he was a big gambler and loser, where did his money come from? How about

selling two- or three-page “stories” to studios like Paramount, MGM, Warners, Fox, and Universal? Looking back, I wonder who was keeping a file on the official file keeper, this icon of absolute rectitude.

The strike seemed to be going well. There were rumblings of complaints from producers and directors who had films in production. They couldn’t get sets prepared properly or in time with the painters and set decorators out, and there were slowdowns at the film laboratories, where management was filling in for the striking lab workers. In my own area, the only evidence of the strike, apart from the picket lines outside, was the hangdog cleaning man who came around to vacuum and dust my office. I avoided contact with the man who was scabbing on the striking maintenance workers. But I actually felt a certain pity for the poor soul, who was at the bottom of the ladder of employment and earnings, probably desperately needed the work, and was fearful for the future, whatever might happen with the strike.

Out of this came an episode when my old nemesis, Boren (the man who had red-baited me during contract negotiations), thought he finally had me by the throat. He complained to my boss, Bill Dozier, that I had thrown the cleaning man out of my office. When I insisted on a confrontation with the cleaning man, it turned out that the man was not referring to me but to a screenwriter who had an office across the hall. Boren wound up with egg on his face. Despite my insistence, Boren never did call Dozier to admit that he’d been wrong. But I didn’t believe Boren was through with me.

The strike succeeded. Contracts were signed, the readers’ first ever, that included a substantial raise from thirty-five to fifty-five dollars a week, plus a handsome retroactive payment of about fifty thousand dollars that was divided among the members. I receive none of this, but was rewarded with a thoughtful gift, a copy of Vernon Parrington’s *Main Currents in American Thought* that was inscribed “To Bernie Gordon . . . with the sincere unanimous best wishes of the members of the Screen Story Analysts Guild, Local 1488, all of whom remember with gratitude and affection your contribution to making us . . . The Fighting 94.”

Life was not all politics, trade unions, and Paramount Pictures. I enjoyed another form of entertainment that was much in vogue in that day. It may seem incongruous to offer a discussion of my personal psychotherapy in this political account of my life with the FBI. But there is a connection. Why ever did I need psychotherapy?

In today’s world, it may be difficult to understand that back in the 1940s Freudian analysis was at its apogee. You couldn’t really claim to

be an intellectual unless you had been analyzed or were in analysis. It was the answer to all of one's emotional and other problems. Even for a lowly reader? Yes. And what were my problems? At this remove of more than sixty years, it is difficult to recall my exact motives, but I can make a stab at it: When I started my therapy, I was in Hollywood, where I had come to be a filmmaker, but after several years I was still stuck in a rut as a reader. What was wrong with me? And during the war, when most able-bodied men were away in the armed services and there were single women galore, I remained tied to a single woman, Jean, and was not plucking the abundant fruit available in this Eden. What was wrong with me? Surely a therapist could set me on the path to great success and immeasurable pleasure. That's what we believed therapists were for.

If all of this seems hopelessly dated, it is relevant to read, even as I write this, in today's (January 3, 2002) *Los Angeles Times* a front-page story about the tremendous anxiety in Buenos Aires, in trouble-wracked Argentina, being dealt with by the "40,000 psychiatrists, psychologists, and therapists [who] have a thriving practice with deeply disturbed clients . . . in the elegant Palermo district of tall apartment buildings and pleasant parks, a neighborhood that is known locally and in travel guides as Villa Freud." So it wasn't just then, and not just in Hollywood, that people were (or are) seeking to cope with something about themselves.

Back then, another problem loomed: the Party strongly disapproved of psychoanalysis, for two reasons. First, because Freud thought that anyone's unhappiness was to be cured by searching into his or her personal history for the reasons and the cure, whereas Marxists believed that personal unhappiness was caused by social conditions that had to be understood and addressed. Second, because therapy meant, by definition, discussing with the therapist or analyst all of one's history, behavior, and activity, this entailed total disclosure of one's political work and associations to an outsider. Very risky. How could anyone guarantee that the analyst was not in cahoots with the FBI? Highly improbable? Certainly, but the rule was that anyone who chose to go into analysis had to leave the Party. If this seems especially narrow-minded and sectarian, look at it from another angle: What would J. Edgar Hoover have said if any of his agents had decided to go into therapy and discuss his work with a therapist? How long would that poor wretch have lasted in the FBI? Discouraging as it seems, evidently the FBI and the Party did have something in common.

Party or therapist? This was a choice most of us were reluctant to make. A solution was found. The Party came up with a "safe" therapist

who had been a Party functionary in Seattle and who had a dialectical-materialist attitude, rather than a strictly Freudian one, toward social and personal problems. Enter Ernest Philip Cohen. All psychiatrists are medical doctors, as are almost all psychoanalysts, but in most venues anyone at all may hang out a shingle and go into business as a therapist. Cohen boasted only a masters in psychology, but, after all, he was a Marxist.

The procedure during the sessions was conventional enough, as far as I could tell. I reclined on a couch while Cohen sat in a chair and took notes. I spoke about whatever was on my mind, free association, and if there was nothing on my mind, I was supposed to speak anyway. If I didn't speak at all, that, too, was meaningful. There was a word for everything: resistance. Eventually we got into dreams, and there was a system for analyzing the dream in which the patient free-associated about the events in it. I found it especially interesting that since the therapist wanted dreams to examine, I started to recall dreams as never before. Whatever the therapist wanted, the therapist got.

This all led to what was called a transference, in which the patient becomes extremely dependent on and close to the therapist, who, in effect, becomes a surrogate father, mother, lover, or whatever the patient needed. In this state, the patient opened up completely and related his innermost thoughts and feelings so that they could be examined by both parties.

In other respects, Phil, as we fondly called him, was unconventional. For example, he was perfectly willing to treat members of the same family. In my case, this meant that Jean also became his patient. Phil did not have any regular fee. We paid what we felt we could, and our willingness to be generous or tight was further evidence of both our problems and our relation to the therapist. I earned little enough as a reader and paid very little, whatever that meant. Phil was also not averse to some socializing with his patients. When, ultimately, Jean and I were married, he and his wife presented us with a lovely set of blue crystal goblets made in West Virginia, Jean's home state. And he and his wife came to one of our first dinners.

Since we only had one session a week, Phil asked us to write out in the intervening days whatever thoughts or feelings we had, whatever ideas, hopes, fears, ambitions, and recollections of the past. No holds barred. I became an extremely prolific writer and turned in sheaves of foolscap every week. Phil never commented on them, and I accused him of never reading them. But, of course, this was all part of the therapy. If

I was hostile, we had to examine that. He not only wanted me to write down everything, he even asked to see the short stories I had written for Professor Goodman at CCNY. I was pleased to turn these over, but, again, no comment, and when eventually I asked for their return, he couldn't find them, and I never did get them. So who was showing neurotic behavior?

Phil Cohen was considered by many to be a brilliant man, a polymath who knew a great deal about many things, including some surprising matters. I had always been interested in photography, and it turned out that he was a real photographer. One day he showed me his Rolleiflex, a type of fine German camera I had always coveted. He even took me to the nearest parking lot and shot some portraits of me. I never did get to see them. I was puzzled. He certainly never seemed forgetful. He was also an expert car driver and gave advice about that. He had become a pilot and purchased his own Piper Cub plane, which he flew out of a local airport. One day he thrilled me by asking me to go along with him on a flight. I did. We got up and flew around the coastline, then landed safely, and I never had a moment of airsickness to remind me of that other flight years before in New York.

On a more down-to-earth level, he was a fine horseman. He had grown up in Montana and learned early how to ride cross-country in the saddle. Since I was having the devil's own time managing to stay on a horse without skinning my knees, Phil gave me some excellent advice, but it never took. I remained a clumsy klutz on horseback, but that, after all, was not the object of the therapy.

I developed a truly trusting and affectionate relationship with him. There was no one who knew as much about my feelings and aspirations, my early life and intimate history, as Phil. In the face of this, it is difficult to convey the devastating sense of betrayal I felt when it became known that at least a dozen of his patients were cooperative witnesses before HUAC, i.e., informers in the 1950s.

Among the first were Sterling Hayden, Meta Rosenberg, and Richard Collins—all Cohen patients. I had just returned from a scouting trip to Europe, where I had gone to see if it might be possible, in light of the impending blacklist, to find film work there. I was about to check in with Phil and report on my trip when word came that he was cooperating with HUAC and probably with the FBI. It was almost impossible for me and my wife, Jean, to accept this, but the evidence was undeniable. Patients of his were informing.

Who and what was the real Phil Cohen? Before going forward with

what I believe is a truly fantastic story, I feel obliged to say that, along with many of my friends who were also patients of his, I believe that I benefited from therapy with him. I have pondered this for years and have come to a conclusion. I believe now that Freud was half-right in his theories about the unconscious and its influence on behavior, though I consider him way off base with other matters about dreams and therapy. I also believe that Marx was half-right about his explanation of the class nature of society and his analysis of the economics of capitalism, though if the history of Stalin means anything, he was sadly wrong about how to build the kind of classless world where we could all live happily ever after. Perhaps the mix of Freud and Marx that Phil Cohen practiced was useful, even if the practitioner himself turned out to be a Hannibal Lecter.

For his book *Naming Names*, the most definitive study of the blacklist and the work of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, Victor Navasky conducted extensive interviews with Cohen, who was then (1974) working as a photography instructor at a Santa Barbara school. The following quotes about Phil Cohen are from *Naming Names* (138–143). Navasky reports that “he [Cohen] was vague about when he got into law enforcement, estimating that it was in 1948, 1950 . . . He did have independent ties to the law enforcement community in California while he was working as a therapist, although he insists that these had nothing to do with politics . . . ‘I was involved with criminal activity, not political.’” He worked as a captain in the sheriff’s office in Inyo County, ranking third under the sheriff and deputy sheriff. There he wore a uniform and served as chief of detectives in a small department “involved in street level enforcement.” The image of short, pudgy, bespectacled Phil Cohen in uniform strikes me as both ludicrous and incredible. Did he dress up, study himself in the mirror, and see himself as a macho guy instead of the sedentary therapist who spent his days listening to people like me? Later there were other connections with the California State Department of Justice; again, later still, at the sheriff’s office. In the 1960s he “drifted back accidentally into photography.” I wonder if he used as an example of his work that shot he took of me one day in the parking lot with his Rolleiflex. Or did that go to the FBI?

All of this came as a shocking disclosure to me. Cohen denied that he persuaded anyone to cooperate with the committee, but he did work closely with Martin Gang, the attorney who was principally involved in getting his clients to be cooperative witnesses. He also consorted with

William Wheeler, the committee's agent in California, whose job was to line up witnesses and get as many of them to "cooperate" as he could.

Navasky asked Wheeler how Cohen had helped.

"He {Cohen} said, 'If you subpoena one of my patients, I'll try to condition him to testify.'"

"Condition or convince?" [From Navasky].

"What's the difference? It was part of the therapy. The whole thing."

"It is interesting that Cohen himself talks of a double life as a hip therapist and Dick Tracy cop and at least in his own mind is able to keep these existences separate . . ." writes Navasky (142).

Navasky quotes my friend Abe Polonsky, the distinguished writer-director, as saying, "We're still trying to find out if Cohen worked for the FBI. I know he was reporting confidences to the FBI. There's no question about that. And he was turning patients into stool pigeons."

Finally, Navasky writes, "Phil Cohen is perhaps too fantastic a character to be emblematic. And yet his links left and right, his role as a double agent (of his patients and of the repression) was no less real than that of Gang or other intermediaries" (143). Fantastic? Surely. Schizoid? Probably. But where is it written that insanity and intelligence are mutually exclusive?

It's true that he never tried to induce me to become an informer. Perhaps he realized from the get-go that it was not in my nature to betray friends and comrades to what I considered a fascistic committee. But reviewing some sessions in retrospect, I wonder. I recall his telling me that one of his close neighbors was an FBI man with whom he had become friendly. When I expressed surprise and disapproval, Phil shrugged and said there was nothing political about it. They were just two neighbors making inconsequential chat over the back fence. Was he trying to feel me out? In 1950, after my return from Europe, none of the above information was yet known about Cohen. But there was incontrovertible evidence that his patients were turning informers.

Jean and I cut off all contact with him. Emotionally it was wrenching. How about having your spouse, your mother, father, sister, or brother turn into the worst kind of despised enemy? Worse than that, we had confided everything in our lives to him on the condition of confidentiality. After all, there are things you don't tell your parents, your siblings, or your dearest spouse. But to your therapist, you tell all. For years afterwards, I dreamed more dreams, not the kind Freud examined.

There was nothing symbolic, nothing that required analysis. They were dreams in which I confronted my dear friend Phil, and more in sorrow than in anger, I would ask if it were true. And how could it be true? And even in my waking moments, I fantasized about encountering him and asking him to explain, but I never had occasion to confront him.

The point of all this: How much did Phil Cohen contribute to my file?

In the file, the identity of informers is always blacked out. Dead or alive after fifty or more years, the informers are still awarded anonymity. Is this legal? It would take a dozen years to challenge the practice in the courts. Does this secrecy serve any real purpose? I can't see that it does after all this time. In any case, it is not possible to prove that anyone was an informer. However, several items do convince me that their provenance was Phil Cohen.

There are references to my several work situations back in 1939, long before I was under any FBI surveillance (3). I am referring to American Documentary Films, the ILGWU, and the Merchandising Film Corporation. None of these were secret, but neither were any of them a matter of public record, and so they should have been untraceable by the FBI. Julian and I were not on any payroll, nor did we pay taxes. Where did the information come from? Check my conscientious delivery of scribbled pages or my babbling to Cohen during free association.

Or this: "In 1950, GORDON was reported traveling in Mexico and later returned to Los Angeles, following which he departed for Paris, France. At this time, he was reported to be making efforts to produce a motion picture in West Germany" (23). All true, but there is absolutely no one I can think of, other than my wife, most decidedly not an FBI informer, who was familiar with this entire itinerary—other than Phil Cohen. It was not necessary to use passports for travel to and from Mexico, and citizens returning through the border were not required to register. What is most interesting is the mention of my "making efforts to produce a motion picture in West Germany." True again, and more about this later. I am certain that only Phil Cohen was privy to this information.

There is a truly remarkable bit of information, "that GORDON was planning to go to France but was financially unable to handle the expense. GORDON's [BLACKED OUT] was then in New York City en route to France" (41). True enough, and it was my friend Julian who was in New York on his way to Europe and who wanted me to join him

there and find work for this newly bloodied team of screenwriters, all of us settling in for the long haul somewhere in England, France, or Italy, anywhere free of HUAC. Footloose as he was, such a risk was possible for him, not for Jeanie and me. We had very limited resources for what seemed like a wild adventure. Actually, as I will discuss later, we decided to go to Mexico, a much smaller gamble. The last person, the only person I discussed this with, apart from my wife, was Phil Cohen, who knew everything I was doing and was offering advice.

On the same page, discovering my mother's birth in Liverpool and her arrival as an infant with an unpronounceable Yiddish name would have been quite a coup for the FBI without an informer.

Such intimate information about me and my past from "reliable informants" occurs only until 1950, after which I had no more contact with Phil Cohen. I can't unequivocally prove the case, but I believe the case rests. Should the FBI be awarded brownie points for recruiting a schizoid therapist to tattle on his patients?

Apart from the matter of who was or was not an informer, the file is awash in endless repetition, page after page, week after week, year after year, of the fact that I was a Communist; or was probably a Communist; or attended a meeting of the Communist Party; or played a role as the labor chairman in a Communist club. The repetition becomes hypnotic and seems to develop an independent significance. Repeated so often, it seems to become meaningful. I must be guilty of something heinous.

Now, one Patriot Act provision allows the FBI to obtain whole databases, including records of citizens not suspected of any wrongdoing. The FBI has a history of abusing its power: monitoring, keeping records on and infiltrating civil rights organizations . . . Little has changed to prevent the FBI from abusing its powers again if it is left unchecked.”

CONGRESSMAN BERNIE SANDERS (IND.-VERMONT), MAY 8, 2003

10. Endings and Beginnings

With the war over on V-J Day, September 2, 1945, the studios, like employers all over America, decided it was time to move against the trade unions and organized labor in general. In Hollywood it was time to break the CSU and return to the good old days of the IATSE sweetheart union arrangement. With the men who had been in military service returning, there was no shortage of labor and no reason to go along with the demands of an independent and militant group of unions. Producers took advantage of jurisdictional problems between the CSU and some IATSE locals to lock out the CSU workers, refuse to negotiate, and precipitate a year-long strife that became really bloody.

All of this was reinforced when Winston Churchill made his celebrated “Iron Curtain” speech on March 5, 1946. It announced the cold war. The Soviet Union, the wartime ally, became an implacable enemy, and Communists became the enemy at home. Through gangster connections in IATSE, word was spread that Herb Sorrel and all of his lieutenants were Communists. There *were* Communists in the conference, but they were not in control. In fact, the Communist Party had initially opposed the strike. But the red scare was, as always, effective. Gerald Horne examines all of this exhaustively in his excellent book *Class Struggle in Hollywood* and concludes that Sorrel and his principal supporters were not Communists. He quotes Carey McWilliams, the esteemed California historian, as “arguing that the crushing of the CSU set the stage for the purges and blacklists, a process that culminated in the case of the Hollywood Ten, a group of screenwriters and directors who resisted this trend” (Horne, 5).

The war over, Julian arrived in Los Angeles at a time when it was quite impossible to find an apartment to rent. I was living in a nice single apartment on Sweetzer Avenue with a living room and a pull-down Murphy bed. I was delighted to welcome Julian back, but did not enjoy the prospect of sharing a single-room apartment, much less the one bed, with him. Jean and I had spent many happy hours in this place for more than four years.

The Hollywood Canteen had closed its doors at the conclusion of the war and morphed into the Hollywood Canteen Foundation, which would be devoted to making contributions to worthy causes from its considerable remaining funds. Jean now worked half-time and at half

salary as secretary for the foundation. She scouted places that applied for contributions and wrote up reports for the board. I recall going with her far out in the valley to the Birmingham Veterans Hospital, where the canteen eventually donated the money for a splendid high-tech exercise pool for handicapped veterans. One place that especially interested me was the City of Hope, a free clinic for tubercular patients in Duarte, just east of Pasadena. The institute was a pleasant collection of cottages, but physically minimal, if not actually shabby. I was happy to see Jean recommend a contribution that was sorely needed. I also recall a contribution to train guide dogs for the blind.

The file also makes mention of the final disposition of funds from the canteen, stating that there was “a meeting to be held on July 8, 1944 at [BLACKED OUT] to discuss what to do about retaining control of the funds of the Hollywood Canteen for use by the Writers’ Guild in a post war development of the Guild” (16). This is preposterous, and one can only wonder what kind of “reliable informer” was at work. The Writers Guild then had very few women members who had been able to serve as hostesses and dance partners for the servicemen, and writing screenplays would have been of little use to the canteen. The writers’ participation in the work of the canteen had been minimal, and they never would have had any call on its funds.

Jean and I decided to get married. The marriage took place on March 30, 1946, and Jean and I made our getaway for a honeymoon at Lake Tahoe. So far as my file reveals, the FBI did not follow us on our honeymoon. Perhaps the still wintry weather in the mountains was too cold for them. Or perhaps they were too busy working with the Los Angeles Police Department Red Squad and the other ancillary police agencies in Burbank that kept tabs on the agitators striking against the studios and picketing Warner Bros., which had been selected as the place for concentration. The lockout became more and more desperate and violent. Efforts by pickets to interfere with the entry of scabs into the studio were met principally by IATSE workers wielding chains and tire irons against the strikers, who themselves struck back. The Burbank Police Department, and the city administration, was entirely at the disposal of the studio, the largest employer and taxpayer. Strikers were regularly beaten by police and arrested. As the strike dragged on, Jean and I made our weekly contributions to the very necessary welfare fund, but despite the feeble efforts of people like us, the strike was lost, the CSU was doomed, and the redoubtable Herb Sorrel, with no place left

to go, disappeared from view. According to Gerald Horne, quoting the *Daily Variety* of May 16, 1973, "Sorrel passed away; his notoriety having faded, he died in virtual obscurity."

Although much has been said and written about the mistakenly headstrong leadership of Sorrel, a much bigger story is excellently presented in Horne's book. Destruction was the fate of the strong trade-union movements that had developed across the nation during the 1930s and 1940s, and this was a harbinger of the kind of political repression we came to know as blacklisting and McCarthyism. Under the rubric of the cold war, the FBI would be busier than ever pursuing threats to domestic security like me.

After the total demise of the CSU early in 1947, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) geared up for its assault on Hollywood. My turn was soon to come, but not quite yet.

Of the hundreds of pages in my file, scores and scores of them have suffered "redaction" (as the censors politely label the blacked-out parts) of almost everything on the page. It was considerate of the FBI to forward meaningless pages like this in response to the Freedom of Information Act. If this is what they send, you grow weary of conjecturing what they are concealing on the hundreds of heavily redacted (or unsent) pages. Imagination takes over. You begin to toy with the improbability that the agents were witnessing some event they really flinched from reporting candidly. What could be on that blacked-out page? I am flung back to my early days at Paramount, a very young and unattached male exposed to an endless procession of luscious movie stars. I occasionally encountered one of them in an elevator, and even sometimes received a smile in response to a self-conscious stare. Surely, Betty Hutton or Veronica Lake could guess what I was thinking as I covertly let my gaze run over their figures?

What would the FBI have done if I had fulfilled my dream and one of these untouchable beauties had actually succumbed to my youthful ardor? Better me than some of these old producers, talent agents, and executives who surely had their way with them on the well-known casting couch. And so she and I would be off to the nearest cheap motel. Mr. Hoover's men, invariably in pairs, with collars buttoned, ties in place, binoculars at the ready, seated in their unmarked car outside, snickering, probably smoldering, at the thought of what was going on inside. What do they report to the director? And what is set down in writing on a page that must eventually be blacked out for my benefit?

Well, it's a black page, not nonobjective art, not a Rothko or a Diebenkorn to be hung on the wall of the Museum of Modern Art. It's a page about me. Reds can dream, too.

But getting together with one of the high-caliber beauties was not to be my fate. Instead, in October 1947 HUAC subpoenaed nineteen Hollywood writers, directors, and producers, requiring them to report for a hearing before the committee in Washington, D.C. Ten of these were called as witnesses and asked about their membership in the Communist Party and their trade unions. Since I was not one of the important, name filmmakers who would garner headlines, I was not among those subpoenaed. On their attorneys' advice, the ten witnesses all refused to testify. They claimed protection from such intrusive questioning based on their constitutional rights of freedom of speech and association. I believe it is safe to say that most people in the country, including legal scholars, believed they were entirely within their rights to claim immunity based on the First Amendment. But this was the beginning of a long and shameful history of blacklisting and political repression, and the ten "unfriendly" witnesses eventually were cited for contempt of Congress, jailed, and labeled the "Hollywood Ten."

Television was still in its infancy. No one I knew had a set. There was radio coverage, but none of us at the studio had a radio, so I didn't really know about my access to fame until the following day, when the newspapers appeared. Although I was not one of the distinguished victims, I did become part of the proceedings when one of the "friendly" witnesses, Jack Moffitt, a screenwriter I never knew, named me as a Communist sympathizer. The Hollywood trade papers, especially the *Hollywood Reporter*, gave the story detailed coverage.

"Moffitt aimed his fire at the story analysts in the studios . . . other analysts named by him as following the Communist line were Bernie Gordon . . ."

One of the attorneys representing the Hollywood Ten, Charles Katz, rose to protest. He had suffered along with me during the protracted and fruitless negotiations for a contract for the readers, and now at the mention of my name in Washington, rose to object that I was a client of his, that I was not present to defend myself, and that the proceedings were out of order. "Katz was gavelled down and ejected when he refused to sit down after failing to get the chair's attention." Nevertheless, my name went into the record and into the press reports.

The cat was out of the bag. The slippery slope I figured I was on now

became a real downhill slalom. The studio bosses said nothing to me, but Charles Boren no doubt was licking his chops. The blow came just before Christmas when, after seven years, I was given several weeks' severance pay and fired. The new times and new year arrived simultaneously.

Jean was very pregnant. Her due date had been calculated for sometime in January 1948, but no amount of castor oil produced the happy event that month. At least I was home to sympathize and, of course, wonder what I could now do to get work and earn a living. The practice of a true blacklist had not yet come into place, so I shopped around the studios for another story-department job. No luck. I even interviewed for work as a writer's agent, but I believe they calculated correctly that I was not the salesman type.

Since I had been slated to start teaching a screenwriting course at the People's Educational Center, otherwise known as the Little Red Schoolhouse, I saw no reason to back out of this. "A public announcement circular of the winter term of the People's Educational Center, 1717 North Vine Street, Hollywood, California, states that the term will begin January 19, 1948 and that BERNARD GORDON will teach a course entitled 'Screen Writing II'" (5). Why I was tapped to teach such a course puzzled me then and still puzzles me. I had never written a screenplay, and since there were hundreds of Communist screenwriters (according to HUAC records), it is surprising they couldn't find an honest-to-God screenwriter. I suppose they settled for me because I had been an assistant story editor at Paramount and had worked with the junior writers there. In any case, the students didn't deserve any better than they got: a half dozen, tops, all women who were no longer young and had a no more interesting way to spend an occasional evening, and possibly were hoping to meet a man. Of course, I would have been suitable: young, proper political connections, a promising career in films ahead of me, for all they knew. Unfortunately, I had one serious drawback. I was married, and my wife was expecting a child. These factors may have explained the rapid drop in attendance. By the middle of February, we were down to a sad couple of ladies who, despite my earnest entreaties, would never produce any sample script pages.

At home, my puzzled, miserable, and impatient wife waited. Finally, on Sunday, February 15, at 7:36 A.M., a wonderful little girl arrived, and I was permitted a very brief glance as she was hustled from the delivery room. The next day I searched for work, and after that, another session at the schoolhouse. I conscientiously appeared, did my job, then

raced over to the hospital to visit my wife and child. But according to the hospital rules I arrived ten minutes too late to be permitted to see the baby.

Now, understand, the babies were all in a nursery in individual bassinets and, of course, behind a heavy glass window. I only wanted a first look at the child, now almost a day old. I explained I only wanted to see her, as was the rule, through the glass window. But she was somewhere back among the others, not up front. I explained that this was my first real opportunity to see what she looked like. Sorry, the officious nurse in charge informed me. I was too late to see the baby. Rules were rules. No exceptions. Of course I was inflamed. I knew that some of the old nurses here considered fathers nothing but a nuisance. I suspected they didn't like to acknowledge that fathers had anything to do with making babies. We were altogether an inferior race. This was like imperialism and the suppression of the colonial natives (fathers!). Seeing the baby couldn't hurt her or anyone else. I demanded my rights. I demanded them right up to the head of the hospital, and when that didn't work, I demanded on the phone that the obstetrician call the hospital and intervene, which he eventually and reluctantly did. So they moved the bassinet with my first and only child up to where I could see her through the glass. My poor wife was embarrassed by the fuss I had stirred up all over the hospital. But I still think I was right. Even poor fathers have some rights in our society, especially if they've just come from teaching at the People's Educational Center.

Where was the FBI while we were bringing another red-diaper baby into the world? Did they have devoted informers at the hospital keeping them alerted to the arrival of potential new subversives? I don't know. But fatherhood or not, they were keeping track of me, as is evident from their Dickensian attention to detail: the same page (5) that reports my teaching at the school also mentions my same old tomato-red Chevy coupe.

In 1941 Henry Luce, founder of *Time* magazine, had come up with a phrase almost as appealing to Americans as "Iron Curtain." He proclaimed that we were embarking on the "American Century." The president of General Motors seconded this phrase right after the termination of the war against Germany and Japan. He was a bit more parochial when he declared, "What's good for General Motors is good for America." It certainly appeared that the revolution would have to be put on hold for a while. I devoted myself to my duties as a husband and as the father of a new little girl, Ellen Kitty.

Julian, also looking to get reestablished in Hollywood, worked with me every day grinding out story ideas and “originals,” hoping to sell something somewhere and get started as a writing team. Always a long shot, we got nowhere. However, we all need a bit of luck, and that came along when a good friend of mine from my reader days turned up working at the William Morris Agency (14) and set out to get us an assignment. John Weber asked us to come up with a “different” crime story for the “B” unit at Columbia Studios. We did. They liked it, and we went to work for two hundred dollars a week (each, this time). The file records that happy event as well as the address of the small court apartment at 6231½ de Longpre where Jean, Ellen Kitty, and I were ensconced (15).

As I study this file page, I am reminded that it was not until August 3, 1948, that I went to work. Until then, my income for seven months had been unemployment insurance, twenty dollars a week. This, plus Jean’s fifty-dollar half salary from the Canteen Foundation had kept us going. The salary at Columbia was Writers Guild minimum, but it seemed grand to us, the most either of us had ever earned. Further, we were now entitled to join the Writers Guild, which gave us the sense that we were finally, fully at work on the Hollywood careers we had dreamed of way back when. Was it possible that despite the gathering political storm that we would really make it—all the way? We certainly didn’t conceive then the extent of the political evils that would befall us and so many others in Hollywood.

As a first-time screenwriter, I was nervous and insecure. But Julian had had some experience working as a writer and with other writers in his days at Republic before the war, and he helped carry the ball. We worked under a new producer, Bobby Cohn, who was no older and or more experienced than we, but had the advantage of being related to Harry Cohn, the boss of Columbia Pictures. Bobby liked the pages we turned in. We had only one serious moment of difference with Bobby Cohn. Despite our new status, we did not forget our social obligations and the fact that the Party kept urging us to do whatever we could, as writers, to work in roles for black actors. So, to make our tiny contribution, when we wrote in a taxi driver, we specified that he be black. It might only mean a day’s work for a bit player, but work was work. When Bobby read the page, he automatically crossed out the word “black” and wanted to know why the taxi driver should be black. Prepared for this, we replied that it was truthful and gave the scene the correct and convincing atmosphere. Crossing out the word even more heavily with his pencil, Bobby explained that it was not permitted because it would

only cause trouble in the South, where theaters would refuse to play the film. There you have the smoking gun. As the House Committee on Un-American Activities had set out to prove: the Party was endeavoring to insert Red propaganda into films.

We worked at this assignment from August 3 to November 27, 1948, then again from December 17, 1948 until January 10, 1949, and from April 22 to May 21, 1949 (15). These additional periods were for rewrites, which indicate that they were satisfied with our work and were not bringing in another writer. The experience was a happy one. We fully expected the film to be made, and this would start our careers as screenwriters.

The film was never made. We were never informed of the reason, probably because there was no reason other than that higher-ups at the studio had simply decided to shelve it. From my experience at Paramount, where hundreds and hundreds of scripts were filed away and forgotten, this was normal procedure. More scripts are written and nixed than are ever turned into films. But it was a blow. Nevertheless, my friend John Weber at William Morris was not discouraged. He had evidently received a positive report about us from Columbia, and he got us an interview at Warner Bros.

This same file page also lists me as having worked briefly at RKO, although I never did. However, it fails to report me as having worked at Warner Bros. Another page lists an "Investigation at the Screen Writers' Guild, the WILLIAM MORRIS Agency, R.K.O. Pictures Corporation and the Columbia Picture Corporation" as well as at Paramount Pictures, all in November 1949 (18). No Warners. One wonders how such investigations were managed. Did someone, identified as FBI, go and ask questions, thus making it clear to everyone that I was under surveillance? Since the identity of the investigator is blacked out, I will never even have a hint of how this was done. Even today, more than fifty years later, I still get itchy thinking of the endless spying that went on to discover—what? Were they concerned about my writing assignments? Did they believe that I might burrow my way into one of these studios or the Writers Guild and take over the U.S. government?

Julian and I went to work at Warners. Our producer, Hugh King, had only just been hired himself. A friendly man, he confided to us that when he had met with Jack Warner, the big boss had asked him how he wanted to be listed at the studio. King had said, as producer-writer. Warner had snarled, "Forget the writer crap. I hate writers!" King had

repeated the well-worn Jack Warner crack: “Writers are schmucks with Remingtons.”

We went to work on a script slated for Ruth Roman, then a rising star I considered an especially appealing beauty. It was wonderful to think of writing a script for a star. But our luck ran out. Before we were half through the script, which was going very well, our friendly producer was terminated. We would have been fired, too, but the story editor liked us and managed to shift us to another project and another producer. The new producer was Anthony Veiller, a distinguished writer with a number of Academy Award nominations.

Ironically, we were assigned to write a script based on a novel by a man who subsequently went to jail as one of the Watergate conspirators. *Bimini Run* by Howard Hunt was an adventurous tale of big-game fishing around the island of Bimini in the Bahamas. The principal character was a giant stingray, but we came up with a plot, characters, and scene ideas that delighted our producer. Encouraged by the enthusiasm of an important writer like Veiller, we were able to relax and enjoy the work.

The legal proceedings against the Hollywood Ten dragged through the courts. Among the other writers with whom we lunched, there was a general sense that the idiocy of threatening writers with jail would be exposed and dropped. Left or right, none of us had any premonition of what was to come.

When we completed our script, Veiller congratulated us on an exciting and original piece of work and sent it upstairs with high hopes. The story editor talked of a contract for us. We were on our way. But the days dragged on. Worry set in. Finally, the answer from above was negative. Warner had once again been “screwed” by writers who had turned out a script that wouldn’t be used. There was no reason to believe this decision was political. The studio heads disagreed with Veiller about what would make a good film for their program . . . or for their casting needs.

In June 1950, the Supreme Court upheld the convictions of the Hollywood Ten, and our friends were carted off to various federal penitentiaries for defying HUAC. In that same month, the Korean War started. Even if war was never declared. Anticommunist hysteria was cranked up to new levels. The Los Angeles City Council got into the act, passing a resolution requiring all members of the Communist Party to register with the police! I don’t know anyone who complied, but the demand convinced us that now anything could happen. Later, we learned the

whole idea was pointless since the LAPD Red Squad had long been keeping track of us. More ominously, the bold public construction of a concentration camp began in Griffith Park, the large central park of the city. With its barbed-wire perimeter and elevated watchtowers, this was certainly a *gulag*, a term we didn't yet know. Elsewhere in California, camps like Manzanar, used for Japanese internment during World War II, were being refurbished for possible "subversives." The press remained mum about this, but word got out. I personally saw the camp in Griffith Park, but only, fortunately, while driving past it. Recent disclosures from FBI files reveal that a half-dozen such camps were constructed around the country to imprison "subversives." These pens would never be used, but who knew that at the time? We all remembered the Jews in Germany who blithely refused to believe that Hitler would move against good Germans like them.

Some of our friends decided to get out. Those who could headed for Europe, where they hoped to find work and safety. Julian had friends in that group. With a two-year-old daughter and very limited resources, Jean and I were not going to be taking the European option. Jean had continued to work part-time for the Canteen Foundation, but now hints of her politically undesirable connections circulated, and the bonhomie that had prevailed with Jules Stein, Bette Davis, and others evaporated. She had no future here. For myself, politics aside, I still didn't have a single screen credit, and with Julian gone there seemed little hope for further work. The heavy reality settled in. People were going to jail for their political beliefs, and no one could say where all this would end.

We had recently become acquainted with George and Mary Oppen. George had been a functionary for the Party somewhere back east, but now seemed politically disconnected. George fiercely and honestly believed that the future of mankind rested with the working class, even though he'd come from a very well-to-do San Francisco family. Although he had broken with most of his family over political differences, he received remittances from a trust. He was evidently ashamed of this, and he never admitted it to us. He and Mary were well-educated, thoughtful, and unshaken in their social convictions. But they were convinced that for the foreseeable future radicals and ex-radicals would face grave persecution in America. They had decided to leave the States and move to Mexico. They invited Jeanie and me to join them. Shaken by all the events occurring around us, Jeanie and I agreed to give this serious consideration.

The Oppens took off for Mexico and wrote to us that they had settled in the San Angel region of Mexico City and were living in a spacious building that had once been a monastery; they assured us that there was plenty of room for our family, too. That settled the matter for us. We decided to leave.

And the FBI agents were right there with us, noting that “‘CP—USA, District 13, Underground Operations,’ [sounds ominous] dated 9/9/50, reflects that GORDON was planning to go to France but was financially unable to handle the expense. GORDON’s [BLACKED OUT, but undoubtedly referring to Julian] was then in New York City en route to France, and [BLACKED OUT] GORDON to [BLACKED OUT]” (41). My eye color and astigmatism are also noted.

If the blacked-out portions refer to Julian, who was in New York with his family, preparing to embark for France, then all of this is reasonably correct. I had no intention of trying to join him there. We were going to Mexico. Interesting, though, that the person informing on us knew all about Julian’s movements as well as my own plans. I wonder who that was.

“In 1950, GORDON was reported traveling in Mexico . . .” (23) and more that we will get to later. Phil Cohen, again? Meanwhile, Mexico.

The prosecution [of Wen Ho Lee], orchestrated by the FBI and the Department of Justice in the name of national security, was one of the most shameful since the McCarthy era . . . In the end, however, the prosecution's failed charges against Lee brought an extraordinary and profound apology from U.S. District Judge James A. Parker. 'The top decision makers in the Executive Branch, especially the Department of Justice and the Department of Energy and locally . . . have caused embarrassment by the way this case began and was handled,' Parker declared from the bench, as he freed Lee after 278 days of harsh pre-trial detention . . . 'They have embarrassed our entire nation and each of us who is a citizen of it.'"

MICHAEL PARKS, IN A REVIEW OF TWO BOOKS ABOUT
WEN HO LEE, *Los Angeles Times*, MARCH 31, 2002

11. Mexico

Jean gave notice at the Canteen Foundation. We arranged to sell our few sticks of furniture on credit and cashed in \$2,500 in savings bonds that Jean had accumulated during her years at the canteen. That was our capital. I put Jean and Ellen on an AeroMexico plane, loaded our 1946 Chevy with everything we could take that might help us make a life in Mexico, and took off a day later.

Since the FBI has repeated references to Mexico throughout the files, here is, in some detail, the real story of my time there.

When I finally reached Mexico City, with the help of the map provided by George Oppen, I threaded my way through the town to San Angel and the address on the Calle de Monasterio. I was greeted joyfully by Jeanie, Ellen, and the Oppens. And, despite a nagging sense that our money wouldn't last very long, I felt that I was embarking on a new and exciting chapter of my life.

The lodgings had not exactly been misrepresented. There was an unkempt but pretty garden with a stone fountain, and the stones of the building were pitted with age, antique, colorful, interesting. This was like moving back to another dimly remembered century. The kitchen was an open-air affair and had a tile stove with openings for firewood. Our bedroom was a large dim hall, rather foreboding, with a huge fireplace that we kept always going in order to fight off the damp and gloom. I tried to find this set-up fascinating, but Jean found it dreary and troubling. Unfortunately, all this sat poorly with two-and-a-half-year-old Ellen, who woke up screaming about the fire that was about to engulf her.

We had even worse problems since, for reasons we never understood, Ellen had arrived in Mexico with a virulent form of diarrhea, which was eventually diagnosed as a lamblia infection. This involved unending sessions on the potty chair with a weeping and terrified child and bloody stools. At last we found ourselves in the hands of a Swiss pediatrician who diagnosed the condition and prescribed for it, though recovery was slow and uncertain.

Ellen had other problems. She had just managed to learn some English and was proud of it. She stubbornly clung to what she knew and argued that bread was bread, not "pan"; butter was not "mantequilla."

As the only member of the party who had even a few words of col-

lege Spanish, it devolved on me to do most of the marketing and other chores, which I enjoyed. Each encounter was a challenge.

Throughout the hundreds of pages of the file, it seems that “Mexico” pops up whenever foreign cities are mentioned during my travels of the next twenty years. I ponder the question of why the FBI seems so fixated on this visit to Mexico or a later one. “Will check file and conduct investigation to determine if GORDON visited Mexico subsequent to his trip to Paris, France,” which followed Mexico (55).

Again, “Los Angeles informant has advised that between 1952 and 1954 BERNARD GORDON made several trips to Mexico City, Mexico” (69)—absolutely untrue. This misinformation is repeated at the bottom of that page.

And in the middle of that page is a fascinating bit about someone named BORIS GORDON “born 7/24/1880[!] at Kharkof, Russia; naturalized in France in 1930. Prior to the Russian Revolution, this GORDON was reportedly a prominent industrialist in Russia.” A mystery to me, but now I wonder if I may have had a rich relative, born many years before my own father, who ignored me in my time of financial distress.

I wonder if the fact that we were living in Mexico with George Oppen, who must have been well known to the FBI as a Party functionary, or if other associations there account for this. Shortly after settling in Mexico, I became friends with a number of other “suspicious” individuals. Bob Allen, a stringer for the Associated Press, had been in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, but only as a journalist. After service in the American army during World War II, he had settled in Mexico, married a Mexican woman, and was raising a family there. He eventually had his American passport revoked, and was labeled “PA,” which stood for Premature Antifascist. A friend of his, and now of mine, Conlon Nancarrow, who had fought with the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War, had also had his passport lifted, had settled in Mexico, and there devoted himself to working as a composer. He eventually became recognized in America as a distinguished composer of original music.

Through these contacts I became acquainted with a number of men who had been active with the Spanish Republican government during the Spanish Civil War and now lived in exile from Franco’s Spain. I was interested to see that they had settled into life as ordinary businessmen who imported typewriters from East Germany for the local market. I guess that was enough to arouse the FBI. In any event, what did they or I have to do with any threat to American security?

Whether noted by the FBI or not, at that time the Catholic Church decided as a matter of dogma that the Virgin Mary had been assumed into heaven, i.e., at the point of death she was taken bodily to heaven. A peddler came around and offered to sell us a banner that could be hung from our wall, proclaiming “CREO EN LA ASCENSION DE MARIA” (“I believe in the ascension of Mary”). These were appearing all over the city as the country moved further and further from its fiercely anticlerical traditions. By now my Spanish was good enough for me to explain to the peddler that, in fact, I didn’t believe in the ascension of Mary. He grinned cheerfully and explained that he also had banners that proclaimed “NO CREO EN LA ASCENSION DE MARIA.” I was tempted, but I turned him down. I was entertained by other little indications of the local culture, like the sign in the window of a tiny restaurant that proclaimed “TEXANS NOT ADMITTED.”

Jeanie and I soon agreed that our accommodations in the cellar-like room at the monastery were not acceptable. We found a splendid apartment on a nearby street, Dr. Galvez, with room enough for all, and the Oppens, though reluctant to give up their colorful historic premises, moved with us.

Now that we were installed like gentry in a seigniorial apartment, we needed help. Mary Oppen quickly chanced upon a young woman who had just given birth to a child that had been conceived when she had been forced into copulation with a cop. Anyway, that was the story, guaranteed to touch the heart of our progressive feminist cotenant. I had my doubts about taking on Francesca and a week-old baby, but Mary Oppen’s concern for the underprivileged prevailed. Francesca and her infant were installed in the bright airy shack on the roof, which we rushed to furnish with a bed and dresser.

By now, the November nights were getting cold at this high altitude. Each night, we had to step over the bodies of people who lay wrapped in their serapes, sleeping on the sidewalk in front of a *masería* a few doors down the street. They had to be here when the place opened next morning to be certain of getting their ration before the masa ran out. We worried about these poor folk sleeping in the cold on hard cement just so they might get enough corn meal mush to survive on. It was, to be sure, the first time I had ever had to step over the bodies of the poor and hungry to get to my front door. And, of course, it confirmed me, all of us, in the conviction that things were wrong with this world that had to be righted. But here in Mexico, we were out of the circuit. There was nothing we could do.

Upstairs, we found to our surprise that turkey time in America was also turkey time in Mexico, for reasons that had nothing to do with Thanksgiving. Perhaps it was another instance of how ancient rituals are transformed over the millennia and continue to exist in one form or another. We found that Francesca had arranged with her extended family to celebrate the birth of her daughter with a feast that would be held at their abode in the Pedregal, the old rock quarry. And we were all invited. To prepare for this happy occasion, Francesca had purchased a live turkey that, leg tied to the bureau up in her room, flapped indignantly and ominously, like a creature that had foreseen its fate. Though we were repelled by the proximity of this nasty-looking and doomed bird, we were also intrigued, and only hoped that we would not have to be near when it met its fate.

Nor did we. Fate tragically intervened. Early one morning, Francesca came screaming down from the roof, telling us that the baby was dead. Jean and I rushed up and found the two-month-old lying in the middle of the bed, where she had slept with her mother. She appeared uninjured, but wasn't breathing. We assumed immediately that, sleeping with the buxom Francesca, she had been inadvertently crushed and smothered. Jean ran for the medical book we had brought with us, while I picked up the child and wondered how to administer artificial respiration to something so tiny. Meanwhile, we shouted to George to run for a doctor, any nearby doctor. All the while, the turkey, disturbed by all this, flapped its great black wings incessantly, as if part of some dreadful *Walpurgisnacht*.

When the doctor arrived, breathless from racing up the steps, he took one look at the child and pronounced it dead; cyanosis had set in. And we could now see the blueness of the skin. The doctor hastily took some information and told us he would have to notify the police. George exploded. How dare he talk of calling the police? This was clearly an accident with no hint of foul play. Astonished, the doctor tried to explain that it was his lawful duty to report this kind of death to the police. George would have none of it. He railed at the poor doctor until after I paid him and he left in confusion. I tried to reason with George and calm him down. But George was not listening. We were Americans, after all, and didn't have to put up with this kind of crap. I was dismayed. Communists shouldn't behave this way. It was very much like another case of extraterritoriality. The local laws and rules need not apply to superior people like us. The police arrived, looked over the situation with a minimum of interest, saw no problem, and departed.

Next we were faced with the problem of a funeral. I assumed that Mexican peasants would have well-established folkways for such an essential ritual as a burial. But they seemed to know nothing. I appealed to the coffin maker across the street, who agreed to furnish us with a modest coffin for a very small child and even arranged for a burial plot at the local cemetery. Then I went looking for a priest to perform the burial rites. At the nearest church I explained the circumstances to a priest. He shook his head and told me he was not interested. It would cost a great deal to get him out to the cemetery for such an occasion, and I would have to pay. I had the distinct impression that the servant class was not considered worthy of the priest's attention. When I consulted Francesca about this, she shook her head and said, in effect, "To hell with the priest. They're all alike. We can get along without him." So the next morning we set out for the burial. The cortege consisted of the Oppen's red Chevrolet van, which carried the coffin plus all the members of the family who could crowd in, followed by my old two-door Chevy, also full of family.

I had paid for the grave and the diggers. All was prepared. The baby was put away. Up in this barren sun-baked cemetery on a hilltop, I thought of the story I had been told of a local tradition: that when a man's wife died, he had to carry the coffin with the body on his back all the way up to the grave. When he finally put the burden down, he understood and accepted at last the full meaning of his loss.

Shortly after this, we and the Oppens decided to go our separate ways. We found ourselves a villa in another part of town. Francesca also had the choice of staying with the Oppens or moving with us. She chose to go with us. We settled in our new home, but money was running short. We did arrange one last fling. Christmas was upon us, and we invited the entire colony of left-wing Americans to share our Christmas cheer. By now a dozen or more Hollywood blacklisted friends had found their way to Mexico, and they all came that Christmas to enjoy the turkey (a fine, clean, frozen American bird without threatening dark feathers). Turkey or not, it was our swan song. I had received letters from Julian pleading with me to get over to Europe because he had some notions of getting work, but we would need a script. Jeanie and I decided we had to end our ill-starred trip to Mexico and return home. I would go on to Europe to join Julian and see if I could come up with answers to our problems.

It was late December 1950. The Korean War had been raging. MacArthur had pushed the North Koreans tight up to their border with

China, and now the Chinese intervened massively. Americans everywhere were in a panic. Many, for reasons different from ours, were rushing to get home. I loaded the car with the same old mess of household goods, Ellen's trike resting on top of the barrels and boxes. I arranged for Jean and Ellen to be taken to the airport for a return flight to Los Angeles, and I planned to take off early next morning.

George and Mary stayed on in Mexico for some years, and we heard that George had used his woodworking skills to open a substantial shop to produce fine Mexican furniture. How well that fared, we never knew. But they finally returned to northern California, where George, to our astonishment, settled down to write poetry. There had never been a hint of such an ambition while he was around us. Perhaps it didn't go with the radical, working-class facade. But he did become a successful and highly respected poet, published a number of books, and won a Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1969.

On the morning of my own departure from Mexico City, I arose early to find Francesca down at the carport, scrubbing months of dirt from the Chevy. I had never asked her to clean the car. This was an act of love, and brought a lump to my throat. I felt we were abandoning her, though we had already arranged for her to go to work for the Bob Allen family. Eventually, we learned that her stay with them ended abruptly when Mrs. Davis, a lovely Mexican woman with three children, walked in on Francesca having sex with a cop (another one) on the kitchen table.

My first day's drive north took me to Ciudad Victoria, about halfway to Laredo. After a decent night's sleep and an early start, I was driving about an hour north of the city at an easy sixty miles an hour. The road here, with no guardrail, ran high above the level of the ground on either side. The fields were planted with endless rows of orange trees. An occasional thatched-roof settlement could be seen among the trees, evidently the villages of the farm workers. But one had to steer carefully because a plunge off the side of the road meant a drop of twelve or fifteen feet.

Suddenly, I saw a heavily laden truck headed toward me. It was loaded with hay or some kind of farm product that extended far out over both sides of the truck bed. I immediately worried that because of its excessive width it might force me off the road. Then, as I neared a curve, I saw ahead of me a boy on a bicycle pedaling north. It seemed that the truck, the bicycle, and I would come together at just the same moment. There really was no time to stop or maneuver. I simply steered for the space that would open between the truck and the bicycle. I almost made

it, but by a fraction of an inch, I clipped the handle of the bike as I passed. The bike and the boy riding it were thrown to the ground. The truck, of course, disappeared to the south. I knew for years by exactly how much I had hit the bike because the car bore the mark, the indentation, on the right door for the rest of its life.

All the warnings I had been given about the danger of automobile accidents in Mexico came back to me, especially when anyone was injured. I had been told that the law required, without regard to fault, the immediate arrest and jailing of the driver under conditions that could be frightful. It had been explained that such harsh rules resulted from the old colonial times (not so long past) when rich *hacendados* (landowners) driving their new, if primitive, motor vehicles had made a sport of deliberately running down unwary peasants on the roads. The thing to do was to step on the gas and disappear. I had stopped the car, and I had to decide immediately whether to start up again and head out of there or go back to the boy.

I shifted into reverse and went back. The bike seemed undamaged. The boy, about twelve or thirteen, was holding his arm, clearly in pain. I asked him where he lived. He indicated his village, a short way back. I loaded him into the car, somehow jammed the bike in, too, turned around, and stopped on the road just above one of the small thatched settlements I had seen earlier. I helped him down to his cottage, where a mother and a great number of relatives surrounded us. I had no idea what to expect, but tried to convey that I would like to settle the matter here and now, even though it might be questionable how much I was at fault. Who could I talk to in authority? I had notions that I would find some illiterate peasant who would be glad to take a few hundred pesos from me and send me off. Actually, I didn't have much more than that to offer.

Unfortunately, the paterfamilias was a bar owner, someone who ran a cantina a short distance up the road, and all the villagers insisted that we go there at once. Now it seemed that half the village crowded with the boy into the car, and I was directed to the cantina. I feared I was in for trouble. Indeed, the father was a gruff, assertive man who had no patience with my halting explanations and wanted to head right back to Ciudad Victoria for medical attention and the police. I balked at this and demanded to know if there was not a doctor close by. Grudgingly, the father admitted that there was a doctor at a small clinic not many steps away. We all went to the clinic.

The doctor in this tiny medical outpost was one who, after receiving

a government-paid medical education, was obliged to spend a number of years in a rural area like this administering to the locals. He spoke very little English. But I conveyed to him that I would like the boy examined to determine if he had a broken bone, and that I would then discuss payment for any medical treatment he might require. The doctor examined the boy, but he had no X-ray equipment. He explained that he could not be certain if there was a fracture or not, and would have to take the boy to the city for a proper examination and diagnosis. I stalled. I said that I wanted the impatient father to know that I would pay for the medical treatment on the assumption that there was a fracture, even if it turned out that there was not. This was getting me nowhere. Then I got lucky.

Attracted by the commotion, a couple of young men drove up in a Chevy that was an exact duplicate of the coupe I had driven through the war years, tomato-red and all. It had California plates. They were Mexicans, and they had just returned from studying citrus culture in Pomona, a suburb of Los Angeles. They spoke fine English. I filled them in on the whole situation and begged them to explain to the father that if, as he was insisting, we went back to Ciudad Victoria to the police, the police would get every peso I had on me, leaving nothing for him. This got the father's attention. I then asked the doctor to estimate the possible cost of treatment if it turned out that there was a fracture. He did. I offered to pay this. The father held out. He said that the boy would now lose a couple of weeks' pay from being unable to work in the fields, and I must make up for that. We haggled a bit, with the help of my new friends from California. I finally opened my wallet, which contained the last of the pesos I had set aside to get me to Laredo. I counted them out, and they came to just about as much as the father had been demanding. My wallet being indeed empty, the deal was struck. I expressed my regrets to the boy, thanked the two fellows from Pomona with heartfelt gratitude, and headed north again.

Fortunately, I had hidden a couple of traveler's checks (in dollars) somewhere on me, though not from any thought of something like this happening, so I would probably have enough money to pay for some hamburgers and the gas to get me from the border to Los Angeles. As I drove the miles to the next city, Monterrey, I kept glancing at the rear-view mirror to make sure there were no police racing after me. How could I know what they would all decide after I was gone? And certainly my failure to turn myself in to the police after the accident would only compound my legal problems. But I arrived in Monterrey without fur-

ther incident, found a bank, cashed some dollars for pesos, got gasoline, and headed for the border.

Even as I had been happy to cross the border into Mexico only a few months before, I was very happy to get to customs and immigration on the American side this time. The customs man laughed at my piled-up vehicle and told me that an awful lot of Americans were rushing home because of the turn of events in Korea. He didn't even complain when he jammed his hand blindly down into one of my barrels and it came out bloody because he had struck a kitchen knife. He just cheerfully waved me on my way. After crossing into Texas, I stopped at the first cafe I found and ordered a big hot fudge sundae. Some American things were difficult to duplicate in other climes.

For the benefit of the FBI's "Legat" (legal attaché!) at the busy U.S. embassy in Mexico City, let me swear that the above is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth about my stay in Mexico. I engaged in no subversive activity and made absolutely no effort to overthrow the American government.

Every decent man is ashamed of the government he lives under.

H. L. MENCKEN, *The American Credo* (WITH GEORGE JEAN NATHAN),
1920

12. A Taste of Europe

I arrived in Los Angeles on the last day of 1950. Jean and Ellen had settled into a spare bedroom at her mother's home. Except for her sister, Marjorie, none of Jean's family had any idea what was going on or why we were flinging ourselves around to Mexico and other lands. During my one day in Los Angeles, I arranged to see a few friends, including Philip Cohen and his wife. I confided to Cohen what my plans were, and we discussed them. He suggested a few people I might contact while in Europe. My other friends knew only that I would be in Europe for a while, searching for work. I told no one but Cohen that Julian and I might try for a coproduction venture in Germany and what was the subject of our story.

The end of 1950, and the general blacklisting of Hollywood people had not yet begun. Nor had we experienced the phenomenon of informers performing for HUAC. Whatever went on between Philip Cohen and some of his patients was altogether unknown.

On January 1, 1951, I flew to England to meet Julian, although the file reports that I was "traveling in Mexico and later returned to Los Angeles, following which he departed for Paris, France. [London, actually] At this time, he was reported to be making efforts to produce a motion picture in West Germany" (23). I wonder where they picked that up. Apart from reporting my trip to Mexico and then to Europe, the file curiously skips the important stop in London and the work I did there. However, the key fact is that we did have a notion of doing a film, with German financing and participation, about Martin Luther.

Julian met me at the London airport. He had just arrived from Paris and was equipped with a bag full of wonderful edibles from France: cheese, sausages, roast duck, and more. The effects of the war were still very much a part of life in London in 1951. There were bombed-out buildings, vacant lots in the middle of London, strict rules against the use of electricity for advertising, severe food rationing, even in restaurants, and periods of blackouts.

Julian and I found a very nice apartment right off Marble Arch and settled in to write a treatment of the life of Martin Luther. Julian had been informed that the subject would interest German film producers, who were still struggling to get their industry functioning again.

I recall the five weeks in London as one of the highlights of a lifetime. I felt like I had finally come home to a land I had only known in my mind, the land of Shakespeare, Dickens, Conrad, Sherlock Holmes. It was perfect in every way. The ban on unnecessary electricity meant no neon or bright commercial signs, so London was dark, foggy, and illuminated at night only with old gas lamps. We walked those dim and beloved streets: Edgeware Road, with Sherlock Holmes's Baker street address a short walk from us, Piccadilly Circus, the Strand, Park Lane, Rotten Row, New Bond Street, the Inns of Court, Hyde Park, the Thames, the bridges, Parliament, all seen through the softening fog, dark except for the occasional warm glow of a pub. We tramped around after work, revisiting the past as if revisiting our own lives. This London seemed unchanged from the city of a hundred years ago.

Julian and I poured it on, reading and typing away until we had thirty pages in a form we thought would make a good film story. We took off for Paris on the Golden Arrow Express, which got us comfortably to Dover, where we were hustled onto a channel ferry. Before disembarking at Calais, we could see the French longshoremen dressed in typical blue coveralls. Already, it was unmistakably France. Once ashore we were herded onto the Paris-bound train. On board we were served a sumptuous French meal. Clearly, anyone arriving from England wanted to be fed.

It was dark by the time we arrived in Paris. An old prewar taxi took us to our hotel. The view of the splendid lamp-lit squares as we crossed the city was another plunge into a delicious past. I could swear I heard the sound of Gershwin's tinkling piano working out "An American in Paris." I expected to run into Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Gertrude Stein on any corner.

Unfortunately, we had been hopelessly naive to think we could promote a film anywhere—Europe or America. In later years I learned through hard experience that it takes much more than a story, or even a completed script. It takes money, the right connections, bankable stars, acceptable and experienced directors, interested distributors . . . and money . . . and the chutzpah to pretend you had some or all of these locked in, even if you didn't.

While we were in Paris, other friends of ours, also political exiles, were scouring the continent for production deals. Most of the exiles we knew were in Italy at the time, trying to put together a production with the actor Paul Muni, who was also blacklisted. None of these efforts ever

came to fruition either. Julian and I took off for Germany with our Martin Luther script, but there, too, they were looking for American financing and distribution, not a deal with a couple of unknown Americans with nothing more than a story. It would have been the same even if we had been people with more distinction and more impressive résumés.

It was a bitter pill to know that only a couple of years later, in 1953, an American-German production of *Martin Luther* was filmed. And again in 1973 an American company produced an even more ambitious film with a substantial cast. Neither of these had anything to do with our treatment.

I had to return to home and family. Julian was staying in Europe. He had promised to help me with the expenses of the trip if nothing worked out. Nothing had worked out, and he was concerned about keeping his promise. For my part, I was dead broke, and though accepting money from him was not to my liking, I desperately needed to. Money he didn't have, but he had acquired a German camera and some lenses, which he gave me to sell back home.

Back in Hollywood, the reunion with my family, while warm and loving, was not cheery. I learned that Jean had been on the verge of selling the 1946 Chevy just for food money.

The FBI, I later learned, had checked with the embassy of every country I visited and had enlisted the CIA to help.

CIVIL LIBERTIES . . . SOMETIMES

- 1798 The young American government, ignoring the recently ratified Bill of Rights, passed the Alien and Sedition Acts, which permitted the president to summarily deport alien residents and made it a crime to criticize the government or any act of Congress or the president.
- 1862 President Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus. Innocent people were arrested arbitrarily and without recourse.
- 1917–1918 During World War I, Congress passed the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918, both of which made criticizing the war effort a federal crime. Around 1,000 people were convicted of violating the laws, including Eugene V. Debs, who received a ten-year prison sentence.
- 1940s–1950s Congress passed laws such as the Smith Act that punished free speech and association. Criminal and civil penalties were imposed on individuals associated with the Communist Party, regardless of the lawfulness of their actions.
- World War II 120,000 Japanese Americans, 70,000 of whom were American citizens, were placed in what President Roosevelt called “concentration camps.” In *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), the Supreme Court upheld the evacuation, a decision widely regarded by constitutional scholars as one of the worst mistakes in Supreme Court history.
- 1970s The CIA and the National Security Agency illegally investigated as many as 7,000 Americans, spying on people who opposed the war in Vietnam or were student activists.
- 2001 The USA Patriot Act permits the government to take the following actions against alien residents: warrantless searches and seizures; the indefinite detention of those not charged with any crime; secret trials in which the accused are denied legal counsel; trials outside the civilian judicial system; summary deportation. The USA Patriot Act II (on the way) will give government the same powers to use against citizens.

13. A New Start and a Big Blow

Back in Hollywood, after selling the photo equipment from Julian, I had a few more dollars in my pocket than I had had when I first arrived to join Julian on Sycamore Trail. I also had a wife and child to support. Despite several aborted efforts as a screenwriter, I did not have a single screen credit to trade on. I had to imagine an entirely new life and career for myself. The old fantasy of Hollywood glory could not have seemed more distant and inaccessible. But as in any decent screenplay, further developments must be expected. My real career as a scriptwriter was yet to begin. Though not before taking some bitter detours.

We found a modest apartment for seventy-five dollars a month on Gardner Street in the dreary flats of Hollywood. We harbored our remaining dollars for eating money while I, at a loss for where to begin, pondered finding work.

Curiously, the FBI whose files are so replete with many of my addresses, appears to have missed the one on Gardner Street. Indeed, in 1950 the SAC (special agent in charge), Los Angeles, recommended that the dread "Security Index card presently maintained for the subject be cancelled as GORDON is presently unemployed and informants do not report current activity on his part with the Communist Party" (13). Apparently, my long absence in Mexico and Europe had caused at least the Los Angeles office to conclude I was *hors de combat*. Had they lost their prime informant? Actually, I hadn't quit the Party.

While I had been away, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg had been tried and convicted of spying for the Soviets and of passing them secrets about the atom bomb. The principal agent for the prosecution had been Roy Cohn, a Jew and the notoriously corrupt aide to Senator Joseph McCarthy. The judge who had been chosen to hear the case was Irving R. Kaufman, also a Jew and, presumably, a man who would have no choice but to pronounce the maximum sentence of execution on a couple of other Jews. He did. Hitler was dead, but anti-Semitism was still alive in the United States. The savage and pitiless sentence, the first one ever levied on civilians accused of espionage, and in a time of peace at that, was also evidence of the anticommunist hysteria being whipped up in the country.

Just for the record: It has been established in a book written in 1998 by Daniel Moynihan, the former senior senator from New York, based

on government files obtained through the FOIA, that the Rosenbergs were not guilty of passing meaningful atomic secrets to the Soviets.

After the 1953 execution of the Rosenbergs, husband and wife, mother and father to a couple of young boys, the political atmosphere in Hollywood became even more poisonous. The studios, many run by Jews, had to make it endlessly clear that there were Jews in America who were not atomic spies, that in this instance they were quite literally holier than the pope, who had pleaded with President Eisenhower to spare the Rosenbergs. The blacklist was growing and becoming pervasive. Any hope that this was a crazy aberration that might soon be abandoned seemed unlikely. People who were blacklisted or threatened appeared to be in a trap from which they would never escape.

But back in 1951, I floundered hopelessly, trying to figure out how to make a living. Do I take a job at a pump in a gas station? Can I get a job as a clerk in a hardware store? Anything. Jean returned to the typewriter, trying to find work with friends who still had hopes of selling spec stories and scripts for production. Since I had not yet been recognizably named in any of the hearings, I was still theoretically employable. Though it seemed then, and seems now, entirely unlikely, I began to build a career that would shape the rest of my life. Soon enough the FBI caught on and would never again let go. Yes, miracles do happen.

A friend of mine sent me out to Universal Studios for an interview with William Alland, another lefty, who was working as an assistant producer. He would be favorably disposed to hire someone like me, who might have political problems, so long as the shit had not yet hit the fan. All political considerations aside, I had never yet written a script on my own, and wondered if I could. Alland had been primed not to ask embarrassing questions about my credits. We hit it off immediately, and I was hired.

I went to work for two hundred fifty dollars a week, and was assigned to an idiotic pirate story. After all, I was as much of an expert on piracy as any other cheap writer. I began to turn out pages, having no idea whether they would be acceptable. Using my understanding that the world was round, not flat, I created some ship pursuits at sea. This impressed Alland and, presumably, the big boss I had never met, Leonard Goldstein. Even though my work was approved, the project was canceled after two weeks. That pattern seemed to be pursuing me. But as had happened before at Warners, I was immediately assigned to another project, this one about a deaf prize-fighter. I knew as little about prizefighting as about piracy, and nothing at all about hearing problems, but that didn't seem to matter. I soon became an expert on both.

The fighter was to be played by Tony Curtis in his first real drama. He had been cast before only in “tits and sand” epics, where he dashed around the desert on a horse rescuing unsullied maidens from Arab pursuers. The writing went well.

When the script was finished, it went directly into production and I was immediately assigned to another script, a Western to star Rock Hudson, another newcomer. As was the case with Curtis, this was to be Hudson’s first sally out of the “B” unit, and as with Curtis, he would become a major star. For whatever it’s worth, I had a hand in starting them both onto major careers. Alland and Goldstein, the executive producer, were so pleased that they were talking of preparing a term contract for me. How crazy could this get? How long before the axe would fall? I had good reason to worry about this.

At Universal, when postproduction on *Flesh and Fury* was completed, I had the pleasure of joining the studio executives at a fine special dinner and then a ride with them in a limousine to a theater for a sneak preview. At last, I got to see my name filling the screen as the sole scriptwriter. It was more than ten years after the awful evening at the Harlem theater. Take that, Ira Green! The audience loved the film. The studio execs were happy. In spite of the dark clouds gathering, with this picture and my Rock Hudson script in the works, I felt my career had truly begun.

Just at this time, HUAC was holding hearings in Hollywood. Informers gave over a hundred names of Communists and alleged Communists, all of whom were automatically blacklisted. My name did not come up, undoubtedly because I had only recently become a screenwriter and was unknown to the informers. Was it possible that my name would never come up, that I would fall through the cracks and go on to a successful career as a Hollywood writer?

But it wasn’t going to be that easy. Even as my work continued successfully on *The Lawless Breed* for Rock Hudson, talk of a contract for me strangely stopped. I could guess what had happened. It was not until I was just about to write “The End” on the screenplay that I cornered Alland and got him to admit nervously that there was a subpoena out for me. The happy times were over. I was unceremoniously fired.

At home, I was reduced to ducking the marshal at the door who wanted to serve me the subpoena. Why accept it? Why make it easy for the bastards?

After little more than a week of this game, I was astonished to get a call from my new agent, who knew only about my successful work at

Universal: “Get out to Warner Bros. for an interview about a job with Brynie Foy,” the man who ran the “B” unit at the studio. To go or not to go? Jean and I kicked this around most of one restless night and decided I should go. At the worst, I might get in a few more weeks at a writer’s salary. I went and was interviewed about doing a treatment for a crime story. I was already an expert on piracy, deaf prize-fighters, and western gunmen. Why not crime? I wrote a thirty-page treatment, then was assigned to write the screenplay. Another successful career in the making! But given my regular hours coming from and going to the studio, I was finding it increasingly difficult to dodge the marshal, who waited patiently to nab me. I decided to take the subpoena rather than have them come after me at the studio. Only a couple of days later, they knew at the studio, called me down, made every effort to get me to become a cooperative witness for the committee (read: informer). I was ushered into the office of Blaney Matthews, the bulky white-haired man who was head of studio security. He had been some sort of cop and had a brutal reputation of having organized the bloody battle against the CSU strikers.

He had been waiting for me, and reached over his desk to shake my hand. “Glad to meet,” he said, greeting me as if I were one of the boys. “Look, Gordon,” he got right to the point, “you know why you’re here. We want a little cooperation. A few words from you, and it’ll be all taken care of.”

I sure as hell knew why I was there.

“No coercion,” Matthews continued, “no one’s pushing you around. You want to think about it, take your time.”

Yes, I took my time. There were two other meetings at which they even had William Wheeler on the phone. Wheeler was the local committee representative whose job it was to round up informers. “Just pick up the phone and talk to him,” Matthews wheedled. But I refused. And I was fired in the middle of my work on the script.

The film was finally released as *Crime Wave*, and because I had written an entirely new story and half the screenplay, Writers Guild rules required the studio to give me some credit. Warners grudgingly listed me merely as one of three scriptwriters. The film has come to be regarded as an important film noir.

Where was the FBI during all this? Right on the ball. “‘By relet’ [Reference Bureau Letter] the Bureau was advised that the subject was issued a subpoena by the HUAC calling for his appearance before the Committee in Los Angeles, California, for the week of 3/23/53. The sub-

ject had been subpoenaed to appear before the HUAC in Los Angeles in September, 1952, but was not called to testify at that time” (21).

The same page continues: “This case will be maintained in a closed status. The subject’s testimony before the Committee will be closely followed and in the event that he is a ‘friendly witness’ consideration will be given to requesting the Bureau permission to interview the subject.” In other words, if he becomes an informer, maybe he can become an informer for us.

Later in the file, the event is reported this way: “GORDON was subpoenaed to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee on 3/23/53. He was dismissed from his employment at Warners Studios as a result of his failure to advise his employer of this subpoena” (42). Not precisely how it happened. It is interesting to note the manner in which the FBI reports the event. Not of great importance, perhaps, but is it an indication of the falseness we may expect from other reports? Is it carelessness? Is it an effort to protect the studio from the accusation that it was engaging in illegal blacklisting?

For all the hundreds of pages of information and misinformation in my FBI file, I find it annoying and inconsiderate that the bureau never saw fit to credit me with any of my accomplishments as a screenwriter and filmmaker. I can find no FOIA pages to back up my story, but you can check my filmography on the excellent Web sites on the Internet.

Colin Powell has a list. And, trust me—you don't want to be on it.

Of course, you might already be on the list, but you won't find that out until a reporter calls to ask about it, or until the FBI shows up at your house at 4 AM.

The list in question, or rather the lists, concern groups that the government labels foreign terrorist organizations, or FTOs, along with the funders, supporters and business entities that aid them. . . . [The list] currently includes 28 groups. Since September 11, other lists have proliferated. . . . [There is] another list, maintained by the Treasury Department, which now contains 153 “groups, entities and individuals” . . . Yet another list, published in the State Department's annual “Patterns of Global Terrorism,” names groups that don't merit FTO designation but are considered bad guys anyway. And yet one more list, the terrorist exclusion list, set up by Attorney General Ashcroft's USA Patriot Act last October . . .

And just as the creation of the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1938 soon saw Congressional investigators joining police Red Squads in raids on Communist offices, the terrorism lists could be used to justify federal and state assaults against a wide range of dissident groups. It's not inconceivable, for example, that the anti-terrorist hysteria could grow to include a crackdown against protesters in the post-Seattle global justice movement, some of whom have engaged in occasional property damage that could have them designated under the very broad definition of terrorism in the law.

ROBERT DREYFUSS, *The Nation*, MARCH 25, 2002

14. Moving On

Though the original HUAC subpoena had been issued on April 14, 1952, there were several postponements, and I was not required to appear before the committee until September 1953. During this time, the FBI did manage to get my address correct (22), but it never followed up, or at least bothered to report, on my nonpolitical activities. During those months, I went to work for fifty dollars a week for a friend, Raymond Marcus, who had a small factory in downtown Los Angeles that fabricated vinyl plastic items for everything from toasters to covers for outdoor garden furniture. A struggling entrepreneur, Ray hoped to increase his business by sending a salesman (me) around to shops, markets, department stores, or any retail establishment that might carry his line. He also wanted to help me deal with my unemployment.

Regrettably, I was a lousy salesman, and even the fifty dollars a week he paid me was a strain on his resources. Clearly, this would not be the answer to my future.

The FBI file shows that the bureau was in close touch with HUAC, waiting to see if I might become a “friendly” witness and a possible recruit to their cadre of informers (21). My turn to appear came on March 23, 1953, when, as ordered, I drove downtown to the Federal Building and found my way to Room 518. I was prepared with a written statement that I knew I would not be permitted to read, and I was prepared to assert my right to remain silent. But as it developed, all of my preparations were in vain. I was never asked to testify. The doctors and lawyers who were testifying before me put up such an energetic battle, refusing to be silenced by the chairman’s banging gavel, that the committee ran out of time before it got to the few remaining bottom-of-the-barrel screenwriters like me.

I was put on notice that I would continue to be subject to call, and I suppose that now, almost fifty years later, I am still on call. I was not exactly unhappy at being relieved of the stress and obloquy of the public questioning, but this left me in an irritating limbo. I certainly had the “game” (being blacklisted), but not the “name,” never having testified or even having been publicly named before the committee, so far as I was able to learn. But I do now have the thick file to prove that I earned my fate.

Because of my earlier refusal to talk to the committee investigator, William Wheeler, under the friendly persuasion of Warner Bros., I was scheduled to appear as a Fifth Amendment witness. A few words about this all-important principle: For all practical purposes, claiming the Fifth was, in the eyes of the industry and the public, tantamount to a confession of “guilt,” and offered no protection against the blacklist. This was so despite the fact that the amendment had been included in the Bill of Rights precisely to avoid the kinds of false and forced confessions regularly extracted in the Star Chamber proceedings of English monarchs.

At the time of the original hearings in 1947, the Hollywood Ten were cited for contempt even though they had claimed their First Amendment right to remain silent rather than discuss their political beliefs and associations. Still, they were indicted and found guilty, and the Supreme Court ultimately upheld their convictions. They went to jail. As a result, the attorneys representing witnesses subsequently called before the committee had no choice but to advise their clients that the only basis left for refusing to answer questions was the Fifth Amendment, which gave witnesses the right to remain silent.

Why was it important to remain silent when a Fifth Amendment defense automatically labeled you a Communist in the eyes of the public and the industry? Because if you once opened the door by admitting membership in the Party, you had to continue answering *all* questions about whom you knew in the Party—you were forced to become an informer. Even more importantly, by answering the committee’s questions about Party or union affiliations, you implicitly acknowledged the committee’s right to ask such questions and invade your political privacy, a privacy won after centuries of struggle against tyrannical governments that had used such interrogations to attack every type of political dissident, every kind of trade union organization, and any kind of opposition to the powers that be. In the opinion of scholars, no part of the Constitution is as vital to democracy as the Fifth Amendment and the right it guarantees—to remain silent.

Today that right is being used by executives of certain major companies, not exactly dissidents or members of the Communist Party. Regrettably, this is giving the Fifth Amendment a bad name. I suppose I must be consistent and defend the right of any crooked CEO to refuse to testify to congressional committees.

It is a great and bitter irony that only in 1977, in a case (*Maynard v.*

Wooley) not trumpeted by our free press, did the Supreme Court reverse its earlier pusillanimous position. In the words of Chief Justice Burger:

We begin with the proposition that the right of freedom of thought protected by the First Amendment against state action includes both the right to speak freely and the right to *refrain from speaking at all*. . . . A system which secures the right to proselytize religious, *political, and ideological causes* must also guarantee the concomitant right to decline to foster such subjects. The right to speak and the right to refrain from speaking are complementary components of the broader concept of “individual freedom of mind.” [emphases added]

Wherever was J. Edgar Hoover when they wrote the First Amendment?

All this occurred while I was still trying to sell plastics. Then, something happened. I had an unexpected call from someone I knew slightly who was working as an assistant producer at the Columbia Pictures “B” unit. Curious, I returned Charlie Schneer’s call.

“Hi, Bernie, I saw the Rock Hudson picture you wrote for Universal. We’re looking for a Western. You have anything you’d like to show me?”

I borrowed a synopsis from a friend, Philip Stevenson, another blacklisted writer who had written an unproduced play about Billy the Kid. This story was approved. I went to work writing the script and shared the minimum pay for the original story with Stevenson and another blacklisted writer, Bob Williams, who collaborated with me so I could continue to work selling plastics. My script was accepted. The film was made in 1954 as *The Law vs. Billy the Kid*. The success of this work started me, with many fits and starts, into a busy career as a blacklisted screenwriter.

During the next five years, from 1954 through 1958, I wrote *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*, which became a cult classic; *Zombies of Mora Tau*, which was certainly no classic; *Chicago Confidential*; *The Man Who Turned to Stone*; *Escape from San Quentin*; *The Case Against Brooklyn*; and *Hellcats of the Navy*. This last was the only film that costarred Ronald Reagan and Nancy Davis, who would later get married and climb into the White House.

Except for *Billy the Kid*, all my other work appeared under the pseudonym “Raymond Marcus,” the name of the friend who had hired me to sell plastics.

I also wrote some episodes for a couple of TV series as well as two documentaries for a sports series that never got produced. During the slow periods between film jobs I joined up with a partner and became a private investigator, working for attorneys who specialized in personal-injury lawsuits in matters like automobile accidents. I would have expected the FBI to show eager interest in my work as an investigator, but I find no mention of this in the files. Either they missed it, or they realized it was not an activity that threatened the stability of the United States. It was a busy time, and I earned enough from this work and the miserable fees paid for the “B” films to support my family.

Though all of this was keeping me busy and out of trouble, the FBI finally did get back on my trail. Julian had given up any hope of finding work in Europe and had shifted to Mexico, which was closer to home and the most inexpensive place to survive. He sailed from France to New York, where he visited his family, bought a used car, and drove to Mexico. I never got to see him during this change of venue or during his ensuing stay in Mexico. But the FBI couldn’t contain its curiosity about him. And being curious about him evidently meant being curious about me.

“Investigation has also reflected that from 1952 to 1954 [BLACKED OUT, but probably Julian, who had moved to Mexico] was residing in Mexico City. As previously reported in referenced letter, Los Angeles informant has advised that between 1952 and 1954 BERNARD GORDON made several trips to Mexico City, Mexico” (69). And, again, at the bottom of the page, they repeat: “Referenced letter reflects that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, [They are on and off with this middle name, which I suppose they picked up from my draft board.] during 1952–1954, made trips from Los Angeles to Mexico City and was reportedly in contact with one”—and the rest is blacked out, again, except for a teasing bit which is left legible: “(ph).” I do wonder who that “ph” was. This is all absolutely untrue. I was much too busy turning out the above-referenced film classics to take any trip to Mexico. I expect by now they had hooked onto another informer, one less reliable than Philip Cohen.

A delightful example of the FBI’s sure-footed work in Mexico is related in the book *Refugees from Hollywood: A Journal of the Blacklist Years* (University of New Mexico Press, 2000) by Jean Rouverol, who spent five or six years as a resident in Mexico City along with her screenwriter husband, Hugo Butler, and five, six, or seven offspring. (They

just kept coming.) In addition to being a writer, Jean was at heart a soccer mom, and she had organized a Saturday ball game for the kids and parents, mostly with other friends who were blacklisted. She writes:

But while we were enjoying it all, the baseball, the picnic lunches, the music, and above all the fellowship, it didn't occur to us (how could it?) that not everyone viewed these gatherings with the same eyes. Years later, when the blacklist and the Cold War had ended and most of us had returned to the States, several of us (out of morbid curiosity, I suppose) sent to Washington under the Freedom of Information Act for copies of our FBI files. And that's how we discovered shuffling through pages ninety percent blacked out (for security purposes!) that the FBI had been regularly reporting our ball game Saturdays those years as a cover for "Communist meetings." (pp. 46-47)

According to the file, I applied for a passport on May 23, 1956 (42). I thought it was somewhat earlier, but in a matter like this, I will bow to the FBI record. I actually had no intention of traveling, but I felt imprisoned in America under all these circumstances and wanted, at least, to have the option of leaving. The report goes on to say that I intended to take a "three months trip to England, France and Italy. His fee was returned to him and no passport issued when he refused to comply with the required noncommunist affidavit." The fact is the passport office didn't ask for any affidavit. It merely asked about my political affiliations, which I declined to offer. The fact is the fee of about two dollars and change was never returned, though I demanded it. And in later years, when I applied for my file under the FOIA, the State Department denied having any record of me. This was certainly false, not only because of the above event, but also because the FBI had me watched by State Department security whenever I traveled abroad, as will be seen in subsequent file pages. In any case, I was very busy at home and made no trips to Mexico, and I believe that the agent responsible for this misinformation should be slapped on the wrist.

In addition to whatever else Julian may have been doing in Mexico that so intrigued our intelligence services, he found time to write a novel, *The Young Lovers*, which was published by Simon and Schuster to much acclaim, and then made into a motion picture. But even here the blacklist ruled. Julian had to change his name from Julian Zimet to Julian Halevy.

With the money earned from this success, Julian returned to Los Angeles. He and I were both in a better financial position. We decided to write an original screenplay based on some of his experiences in Mexico.

Through the last half of 1957 we worked on a script we called *The Beach Boys*. This was long before a musical group used the same name. Ours was a story about the love affairs and more serious problems of a couple of expatriate Americans living on the cheap in the exotic town of Acapulco. The agency that had sold Julian's novel to Simon and Schuster was immediately enthusiastic about the script. Early in January they sent it out and got a number of offers. Kirk Douglas offered \$35,000. MGM offered \$61,000. Columbia purchased it for \$75,000 plus ten weeks' guaranteed rewrites for each of us at \$1,000 a week. This added up to a total of \$95,000. Wow! We knew the blacklist was still in effect, but it didn't feel that way to us at the moment, even though, of course, the script did not bear our true names. I remained Raymond Marcus, and Julian was Julian Halevy.

Our producer at Columbia, Roger Edens, had just moved from MGM, where he had been an associate producer to Arthur Freed on many major musicals like *The Band Wagon*, *Deep in My Heart*, and more recently the smash hit *Funny Face* with Audrey Hepburn and Fred Astaire. He was a delightful man, and ecstatic at having acquired *The Beach Boys* for his first production at Columbia. He greeted us enthusiastically and promised to make *The Beach Boys* the most beautiful production we had ever seen. We were certain we were on our way to an Academy Award. The blacklist? We didn't know if Edens was aware of it and felt he would not care. But how would the Academy handle the problem of giving us our Oscars? That could wait.

We worked for several weeks, Edens making minor script changes that even I found reasonable, and happily collected our \$1,000 each Friday. Then an unpredictable disaster occurred. Harry Cohn, the absolute boss of the studio, who had approved the purchase of our script, dropped dead. So far as we know, his demise had nothing to do with the fact that the studio had hired a couple of blacklisted and suspect writers. But this led to a ruinous change of management. The new studio heads decided to switch the casting of our film so that it would star Kim Novak, their premiere female lead. Our story had been designed for a couple of male leads like Burt Lancaster and Kirk Douglas, with a secondary role for a woman. Now, it had to be engineered to star a female, lovely as she was, who refused to be photographed in a bathing suit. *The Beach*

Boys without the boys or the beach! Hollywood! We continued working through our ten-week contract guarantee, trying to satisfy everyone, trying to preserve our baby, and waiting for the assignment of a director who might side with us.

Rumor was that we would get Charles Vidor, one of their major directors, whose major credits included big Rita Hayworth films. But what that meant for us when we completed our ten weeks we didn't know. Meanwhile, our agency had concluded a deal for us to rewrite our script so that it could be published as a book upon release of our film. Another \$10,000 for us.

Julian and I decided to go to Acapulco to do the writing. Julian could renew some old acquaintances there, and I could visit the fabulous resort for the first time. Julian flew to Mexico City and then to Acapulco to arrange some living quarters for us. I chose to drive, joining him in Acapulco after a one-night stay for rest in Mexico City. For the benefit of the FBI, which seemed to have trouble deciding when I was or was not in Mexico City, this was the full extent of my other visit there. I saw only Bob Allen, who gave me a gallon bottle of homemade tequila, which he prized.

In Acapulco, Julian and I had barely started on the novelized version of the script when a call came through that Roger Edens, Charles Vidor, and the great Oscar-winning cameraman, James Wong Howe, were coming down to scout locations for the film.

Great credits or not, Vidor struck me as a boor and a bully. He was interested exclusively in having sex with anyone from the hotel chambermaid to some mythical Mexican beauties. Despite our sharp personal differences, Vidor agreed we should return to Hollywood and work another ten weeks, on salary, to turn our script into a Kim Novak vehicle. Columbia provided us with first-class air tickets for the return. Back in Hollywood, the work went badly. When our time was up, we worried that the film, at least our version of it, would never be made. And that's what happened, despite a number of rewrites by several high-priced women screenwriters.

Altogether an unhappy experience, which, had it turned out properly, might well have initiated major careers in Hollywood for Julian and me. At least we did wind up with plenty of money. The first thing Jean did after the sale of the script was to quit her job and happily devote herself to home and family. This didn't last long because suddenly, momentarily, during that same year, 1958, the Supreme Court ruled that the State Department had no business denying us passports on politi-

cal grounds. We all stampeded to apply for passports and the required photos.

Of course the FBI had been following all of these happy developments, and was now gifted with a bonanza of current photos of me and, I presume, everyone else. Page 110 exhibits what I consider a rather decent passport photo of me, dated 1958.

Nor was the bureau collecting these photos idly: “ReLAlet [reference to Los Angeles letter] sets forth information concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON and it appears this individual is a logical suspect in this investigation. It is noted that the time WFO [Washington Field Office] reviewed passport record concerning this individual no photographs were retained for WFO’s file” (49). Well, I was a “suspect” in some “investigation.” Suspected of what? I’ll never know and can’t possibly guess. There is someone whose name is blacked out at the top and the middle of the page, something else apparently I will never be permitted to know. Under the heading of LEADS on the same page, a message to or from NEW YORK DIVISION says “Will forward to WFO photograph of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.” Under WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE AT WASHINGTON, D.C.: “Will exhibit photograph of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON to source when he becomes available after 8/18/62.” It certainly begins to sound thick, right out of *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* or *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*.

I can see it all now. The “case” has come to trial, and I am being cross-examined by the prosecutor from the Department of Justice.

“You are Jew?”

“Yes.”

“And a Communist?”

“Yes.”

“And you went to CCNY at the same time as Julius Rosenberg?”

“Yes.”

“And you have suddenly come into a good deal of money?”

“Yes, but . . .”

“Just answer the question. Did you or didn’t you?”

“Yes.”

“And still, in spite of all this evidence, you insist you are not guilty?”

The case goes to the jury. What jury would acquit me now? Will I at least have a choice for my execution? Electric chair? Shocking! Hanging? Awful! Firing Squad? Do they aim for the heart or the head? Where

will this case end? What dreadful secrets might “he” (the source) disclose when he becomes available after August 18, 1962?

If the bureau was anxious about the source of my sudden affluence in 1958, I could have proved that all the money came from Columbia Pictures except for a few thousand from the publisher that had paid us for us the novel rights. Later in the 1960s when the bureau was frantically probing all over the place, my earnings were from film writing, which I will describe in detail and with satisfaction. None of it was Moscow gold.

One bright and sunny morning in the shadow of the steeple
By the relief office I saw my people
As they stood hungry I stood there wondering
If this land was made for you and me?

WOODY GUTHRIE, "*This Land Is Your Land*," A LITTLE-KNOWN VERSE

15. A Grand Tour

September 1958. Passports in hand, we flew to New York, visited the family, then went down to the bustling Hudson River pier to board the *Cristoforo Colombo* of the Italian line for our trip to Europe. The grand ocean liner was nestled to one side of the pier; a long line of passengers moved up to a shack across from the gangway to show their tickets and passports before moving onboard the ship. At the shack, I passed through my tickets and passports, which were examined by a ship's officer, who then signaled okay and indicated I could go ahead and board. But I wanted the passports returned. He refused, saying I would receive them later aboard ship. I reached through the window and grabbed the passports.

I was not going to surrender the hard-won passports. How did I know that some fink from the State Department wasn't waiting with some excuse or a new court order to grab them? The long line came to a stop. The Italian officers conferred about how to deal with this American asshole. Finally, in the interest of a timely departure, they waved me off and told me I could board the ship. I collected Jean and Ellen. We mounted the gangplank and were directed to our stateroom.

Several days later, in the middle of the Atlantic, the purser came to me and asked if it would be all right for him to take our passports now. I graciously consented. I felt the State Department and even the FBI were well behind me now. They were and they weren't. They never bothered me during the seven or eight months abroad. But I learned much later that they were following my movements in Europe as though I might still be a menace to domestic security.

But all worries seemed to be behind us. The trip was a blast. I still cherish the memory of it as the best trip I ever had. We drank. We danced. And did we ever eat! Ellen discovered gourmet dining in the form of veal scaloppini marsala and veal scaloppini *al limon*. She ordered one or the other every dinner, to the delight of the wonderful waiter who approved of her determined plunge into fine Italian cuisine.

We felt we were being rewarded very well for having lived through poisonous times.

We disembarked at Cannes, where we spent a couple of days enjoying our first visit to the storied French Riviera. From the adjoining city of Nice, we entrained for Switzerland. We put up at a splendid hotel in

Lausanne for several days and drove around the area in a rented car. We visited a number of the schools that had been recommended for Ellen and let her have her choice. She was not happy about any of them. Being abandoned in a foreign country with a strange language was not her notion of how her loving parents should treat her. But she bowed to the inevitable and chose a school, the *Gai Matin*, in the colorful mountain town of Villars.

Jean was as miserable as Ellen at the separation, but she, too, bowed to the inevitable and took off with me for Stuttgart, Germany, where we were due to pick up the Mercedes we had ordered in Los Angeles. Today that may seem like a wildly extravagant thing to have done, but with the dollar as strong as it was then, the car—not even the smallest model—cost a trifle more than two thousand dollars. Germany was still Germany for us, and during the night we spent at the Stuttgart hotel while waiting for the delivery of the car, Jean dreamed of being pursued by the Nazis. We picked up the car and drove out of Germany as quickly as possible, being pursued by neither the Nazis nor the FBI.

We headed back for Villars, as we had promised Ellen, but stopped for a day as soon as we crossed the Swiss border in the city of Bern. I mention this because Bern, the capital, is where the American embassy is located. We had no contact with it, but visited the famous bears of Bern, and even took in a performance of the opera during our one night there. But the Bern embassy appears repeatedly in subsequent file pages as one of the embassies where the “Legat” (FBI legal attaché) is asked to check on my activities (56, for example). How did they ever know that we had merely touched down there for a single day? Or was it simply because of our repeated visits and stays in Switzerland to be with Ellen that inquiries about our activity were referred to Bern?

Stuttgart does not appear in the file, unless it is redacted, i.e., censored under a lot of black ink. I love the fancy word they use for censorship. They certainly followed my every move in Europe for the next twelve years. The “legats” of Paris, London, Rome, and Madrid as well as Bern did what they could to determine what kind of threat to domestic security I represented. Not really aware of all this attention, we managed to have a great trip. Now, I can only wonder how much the surveillance of my peregrinations cost the American taxpayer. I know it will sound petty and unpatriotic of me to confess that even though I was never a threat to domestic security, it gives me some satisfaction to know that the expense of all that dedicated snooping must have contributed something, however small, to the dysfunction of the American economy.

I do believe that the police-state character of countries like the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and many others helped bring down the regimes in those states. Today, even with Hoover long gone, I am patriotic enough to worry that the same kind of mentality is at work in our own country and to feel concern about where we are headed in a world increasingly hostile to us.

After returning to Villars to visit with Ellen and take her for a ride in the new car, Jean and I set off for our first trip to Italy. We visited with family in Milan, where a cousin of mine had married and settled down with an Italian. Then, a visit to Florence, towns on the Italian Riviera south of Genoa, and finally a visit with Julian in Rome. He seemed to have settled in happily in Italy, and was enjoying the company of available Italian girls, who helped him with, among other things, mastering the language.

A week in Cannes was a great delight. We made friends with some Brits and Americans who took us out on their yacht, cruising back and forth between France and Italy and smuggling American cigarettes and British whisky to make ends meet. Then a venturesome drive in the Mercedes across the icy French Alps to Grenoble and on to Paris, where we had joyous reunions with friends like the Jack Berries and the Mike Wilsons, all refugees from Hollywood.

We arranged Christmas in Paris with Ellen and Easter in Rome with her during her school spring break. Then on to Vienna as a special treat for Ellen to see the Spanish horses perform. On the way back, we managed a stay in Salzburg, avoided Germany, but did a thrilling tour of Switzerland on the way to Villars. To satisfy Ellen and Jeanie, we arranged a long stay in Chesieres, a Swiss mountain village only a good walk from Villars. I undertook to learn to ski, and then failed my beginner's test.

All this tourist traveling appears to have concerned our intelligence agencies. Perhaps even our Christmas in Paris. A memo dated March 3, 1959, from Legat, London, makes no mention of Chesieres, where I was on that date, though there are around three blacked-out lines that may conceal—whatever (26). The main point of interest is that Paris as well as London is involved; five copies are going to the Bureau (meaning Washington); and two to Los Angeles. Fortunately, the page indicates that without “further leads outstanding[,] this case is being placed in an RUC [referred upon completion] status,” which sounds like standby.

With spring threatening to melt the remaining snow, we set out for Spain through Lyon and southern France. On the way, we had the good

fortune to see the fabulous prehistoric caves of Lascaux, which were still open to the public, then on to Spain and all the glorious sites there.

Now, in May, we rescued Ellen from her school in Switzerland and headed for England, where she eagerly settled in at “Moat Farm” in the Midlands, where young women learned to handle horses professionally and acquired certificates that qualified them to work in racing stables. Heaven for Ellen, though she was still too young to become a pro.

With Ellen happily settled among friendly English girls and very friendly and lovely English ponies, Jean and I did our grand tour of England: Dover, Cornwall, Truro, Penzance, Lands End, Oxford, back through London, and on to Cambridge.

More suspicious tourist traveling that must have concerned our intelligence agencies.

There is a memo (27) dated February 25, 1959, conveying a rather sharp demand from the director’s office to the legal attaché, London, for an “immediate” report, which finally did come through on March 3, 1959 (see above). The demand from Washington seems urgent, but nothing came of it except the usual black ink. London had no good gossip about me.

On March 10, 1959, I was still in Chesieres, falling down on skis. But now Paris has to report on me (28), and refers to a memo from Los Angeles dated December 24, 1958, when I was in fact in Paris with Ellen and Jean for Christmas and staying at a very modest hotel, the Duminy, on the Right Bank. Because Ellen was not feeling well, I arranged to have a splendid dinner delivered for Christmas Eve from the Meurice, only a block away and one of the very best hotels in Paris. This extravaganza, plus the little Christmas tree I had managed to find and decorate, caused quite a stir among the hotel employees, who all came by to admire this quaint American Christmas celebration. Is this what is hidden under the black ink on this memo from the American embassy in Paris?

By August 11, 1959, we were back home in Los Angeles. The memo from the London legat of the same date (30), six copies of which went to Washington and three to Los Angeles, must have been reporting on this discovery, hence the multiple times it was stamped “CONFIDENTIAL” and “SECRET.” But there is nothing readable on the page.

Finally, tour time over in Europe, we picked up Ellen at Moat Farm, ferried from Dover to Antwerp, and there we boarded the Dutch freighter *Almdyk* for our return to the United States. We had decided to cap our year abroad with a journey on a freighter that would carry us to

Houston with our car; that way we would have only half a continent to drive across to get to California.

The *Almdyk* was a delight. There were only twelve passengers, large sunny staterooms, hearty Dutch meals in the dining room that we shared with the officers, and all the free Heineken beer we could consume. Captain Reedyk was a cheerful host who would call us at any hour of the night to get up and look at the sky when a bright planet like Venus appeared. He took Ellen under his wing and made her an honorary purser, with a properly engraved certificate to validate this. In her new capacity, she was required, to her pleasure, to serve the officers occasional dishes in the dining room.

On one occasion when the passengers were lolling in the stern, we were astonished to note that the ship's wake was making a full circle right in the middle of the ocean. When we rushed to the bridge to see what was happening, we found Ellen at the ship's great wooden wheel. We learned that it was standard practice for checking the navigation equipment to make such a circle in mid-ocean, and Ellen was delighted to have been given the job of making this happen. She has never forgotten this moment. And she wept honest tears when we finally disembarked in Houston and had to say farewell to the captain and his crew.

A second FBI memo dated August 11, 1959, this one from Washington, may be a response to the London letter of same date, but it doesn't say to whom it is addressed (31). However, interestingly, in the upper-left-hand corner are handwritten scribbles: Holland, Belgium, England, and perhaps Switzerland. This makes it clear enough that the bureau never lost sight of me, even when I was boarding the Dutch freighter from Belgium. I can only wonder if there were any opportunities to be subversive on the *Almdyk* while on the high seas. Then there is the question of whether they managed to follow Jean and me into the caves of Lascaux and Altamira to check on our subversive communication with those twenty-thousand-year-old paintings.

NOW

And after 9/11, the tenor of news coverage has changed so drastically that I often no longer recognize the coverage on the network where I worked for two decades. Some editors and reporters in American media now see themselves as “patriot police,” engaging in jingoism and self-censorship. Throughout much of the world, the U.S. press is perceived as nothing more than a mouthpiece for the administration, and by extension Israel.

ROBERT WEINER, *Los Angeles Times*, JANUARY 20, 2003

THEN

Nothing can now be believed when it is seen in a newspaper. Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into that polluted vehicle.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, LETTER TO JOHN NORVELL, JUNE 11, 1807

16. In and Out of the Soup

Back home, a familiar problem confronted us. Survival. True, we weren't broke this time, but the money in the bank wouldn't last forever, and at forty-one I was not ready to retire. How to kick-start a career as a screenwriter? *The Beach Boys* was going nowhere as the studio continued to try to turn a prince (our version) into a toad. At least I could forget the problem of preparing an acceptance speech for my Oscar.

I expect that even if you drill oil wells or teach Greek, your chances of getting work depend as much on who you know as on what you know. This is even truer in Hollywood, where hiring a screenwriter is a risky investment. You always want to work with someone who has delivered for you in the past. Fortunately, I had one such connection. My friend Joe Steinberg, for whom I had written the scripts for the sports series, still had the filmmaking bug. He had purchased the rights to a novel about fighting in the Philippines in World War II, *Fortress in the Rice* by Benjamin Appel. The subject matter interested Joe for several reasons, but mainly because his brother was a wealthy and well-connected American entrepreneur in the Philippines. I had never met Harry, and it may be unfair to call him a robber baron, but he was prepared to put up all the below-the-line money for a shoot there. If the pesos were tainted, this wouldn't be the first time such trespass had occurred in financing a film. Joe was a really straight shooter. He had little up-front money to pay for a script, but I was eager to get to work and I liked the material.

About six hundred pages long, the novel covered many characters, situations, and issues related to the Japanese occupation of the Philippines during the war. Here was a chance to write a film script that would have something to say about American attitudes toward native people in those days, a subject usually ignored in Hollywood's rah-rah emphasis on American military prowess.

My insistence on pulling up the carpet to examine the underside of our history must surely have confirmed J. Edgar Hoover's conviction that I was a threat to domestic security. But his boys seem to have been snoozing through all this. As usual, they fail to mention, at least in anything I can read, any accomplishment in which I take pride.

Ironically, through an accidental circumstance, *Cry of Battle* eventually achieved a curious immortality. In Dallas, Texas, on the fateful day of John Kennedy's assassination, Lee Harvey Oswald was appre-

hended by the police in a movie theater that was running the film. Many years later when Oliver Stone was producing his film about the assassination, his production manager reached me and asked for a print of *Cry of Battle* so that the Stone film might accurately portray the original circumstance. I was able to supply the print, and a fraction of a minute of *Cry of Battle* became part of Stone's *JFK*.

In a curious coincidence, a recent documentary film, *All the Presidents' Movies*, aired on the Bravo channel, reports that the last film President Kennedy watched at the White House before departing for Dallas was *55 Days at Peking*. Though I lean toward dialectical materialism rather than mysticism, I find it chilling that the first two films I was properly credited with after being blacklisted are associated with one of the great tragedies of American history.

The FBI appears to have missed all of this and what it may portend.

When finally released in 1963, *Cry of Battle* did quite well. It opened for a two-week engagement at the Victoria Theater on Broadway and received a good notice in the *New York Times*. The Bosley Crowther review is headlined "Two Men in Sizzling Conflict," and continues, "There are scenes in this acerbic and action packed account of the two men's perilous adventures in trying to save their lives that seem so substantial and authentic that they cause your eyes to bug."

It took Joe Steinberg a long time to get a cast together and arrange a distribution deal. Meanwhile, Irving Lerner, the friend who was scheduled to direct the film, had gotten another assignment: to direct *Studs Lonigan*, based on the trilogy by James T. Farrell. The producer, Philip Yordan, was someone I had yet to meet. He was already a legend in Hollywood. With about fifty screenplays to his credit (an improbable number, as one reviewer acidly remarked), Yordan had taken off for Europe to work with Samuel Bronston on a major film being produced in Madrid. He had left the making of *Studs Lonigan* to Irving and a production manager.

By early 1960, *Studs Lonigan* had been shot and edited, but it didn't work. Irving asked me to look at it and come up with some suggestions. The upshot of this was that with Yordan returning from Madrid for a quick look at the film, Irving was in a sweat, and he asked me to meet with Yordan and come up with ideas for curing the problems. On a Saturday morning, we all gathered in a projection room with Yordan and ran the film. The scene that followed was truly memorable, for it altered my life. After the screening, Yordan wasted no time discussing what was

wrong. He was clearly a man in a hurry and wanted to know only if there could be a quick fix. He turned to me and asked for my proposal. I responded, “You’ve lost the cast. You can’t do any reshooting. The only thing I can think of is to write a narration to tell us more about the character and pull the story together.”

“You have any ideas?” Yordan couldn’t wait. “Give me a single line.”

What I had in mind was a little more than a line. It would be the first bit of narration, something that would express the inner confusion of the protagonist and his wish for direction, a line that would set him out toward some self-discovery and provide some empathy and understanding for the character. “It’s right at the beginning, the New Year’s Eve scene when his girl walks out on him. It could go like this, in the character’s own voice: ‘It’s the year 1920. Never can be 1919 again . . . not in a hundred million years. So what? What you gonna do in 1920? Where are you going? The world ain’t a year older—just one day—one more day that’s good for nothing.’”

Yordan instantly grasped the value of the approach. He said, “Okay. Go ahead. You’re hired.”

Out in the parking lot, nothing had been said about an employment agreement or pay. Yordan left it to me to ask. “You know,” I said lightly, “I’ll want to be paid.”

“How long will you have to work on this?”

“In addition to writing the narration, I’ll have to work with Verna (Fields, the film editor) to make changes in the continuity. I figure about four weeks’ work.”

He offered no argument. “How much do you want?”

Quoting my last deal at Columbia on *The Beach Boys*, I said, “I get a thousand dollars a week.”

“Forget it.”

“But I’ll give you a flat deal. \$2500.”

“I don’t have the money.”

I knew this was nonsense because there had to be money for the reedit and recording the narration. Plus, he had to pay for titles, lab work, dubbing, and all the considerable expenses of postproduction. But who was I to argue with the big man? Instead, I smiled. “I’ll lend you the money.”

Yordan stared at me, a hint of a smile on his lips. He knew I was making a little joke; maybe he even understood that I knew he would respect a writer with money in the bank more than one who was broke.

“Okay,” he said. “I’ll pay you.” Then, characteristically, he offered a big carrot, “You want to come to Spain and work for me?”

Did I ever. A chance to work in Europe and get away from the oppressiveness of Hollywood. I made no attempt to conceal my interest. “Yes, sure.”

“All right,” Yordan said. “Finish this job. I’ll be ready to send for you in six weeks.” He got into his car and was driven away.

I turned to Irving and asked, “Is he serious?”

Irving shrugged. “He could be.”

It turned out to be considerably more than six weeks, and there were twists and turns along the way. But I did finally wind up working for Yordan in Europe for much of the next ten years. I relate this encounter in detail because I want the FBI to know how it all started and why I spent many of the next years, as I will relate, living and working in Europe. If they had listened in that day in a parking lot in Beverly Hills or questioned anyone, they would have been spared a great deal of effort and money in relentlessly pursuing my every move in Europe from at least 1960 to 1970. And they would not have had to bother enlisting the assistance of the State Department and the CIA in every capital city I visited or worked in.

But six weeks and more passed. I didn’t hear from Yordan. I came up with another notion for a film, this one about the Tour de France, the great European bicycle race, and persuaded some people to pay for my way to Europe to research the story and come back with a treatment.

That September, the Democrats had scheduled their presidential convention in Los Angeles. Jean and I decided that this was an opportunity to expose twelve-year-old Ellen to a hallowed American institution. We drove down to the town center, parked, and ambled into the Biltmore Hotel, which was the center of action. Everybody who was anybody, including the candidates, was operating out of rooms and suites that opened into the corridors. No one questioned our right to enter the hotel or stroll around and peer into the rooms. To this day, Ellen remembers the experience, the air of excitement and the totally relaxed sense that everyone, even a kid, had the unquestioned right to witness this grand operatic show so central to our democracy.

Even I, though conscious of my history as a despised dissenter, was struck by the open and relaxed atmosphere. I recall that day now when things have changed so much in our country. But, of course, I have retained my right to dissent. I was disappointed and disapproving when

Kennedy decided to choose the Texan, Lyndon Johnson, as his running mate. I thought this was a sell-out to the southern reactionaries. But Johnson turned out to be one of our better presidents in the areas of civil rights, civil liberties, and even racial justice. Not a bad president at all, give or take the Vietnam War.

Despite my sense of freedom of association, it turns out that the FBI was keeping close tabs on me. There is a page that appears to be part of a long file—note the “7” at the bottom of the page—most of which has been withheld from me (46). It records, again, that I was issued a passport in 1958 for a trip to Europe (the year abroad with the family). Then it says the passport was renewed on July 25, 1960. Was a renewal necessary after only two years? This puzzles me. But it goes on to say that I “planned to depart Los Angeles on 7/26/60 by Air France for five weeks in France doing research for a story.” It intrigues me that they were keeping such a close watch as to get most of this information correct. This, of course, was my trip to research the Tour de France story. Who was their informant? However, I did not travel on Air France. For no special reason, I have never flown the Atlantic via Air France. I recall that the trip in question was on Scandinavian Air Service, which put down in Copenhagen before moving me on to Paris. It is so odd that again and again this potent investigative agency gets such small facts wrong.

Once in Paris, I immediately called my old friends, the Michael Wilsons. Around the time he had been blacklisted, Wilson had won an Academy Award for his script for *A Place in the Sun*, based on Theodore Dreiser’s *American Tragedy*. Then, his script for *Friendly Persuasion* won the Oscar, but because Mike was blacklisted, the award was not made. To get away from Hollywood, Mike and his family had moved to France where, because of his well-deserved reputation as a top screenwriter, he won important assignments. One was for the script of *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, which he wrote with another blacklistee, Carl Foreman. This screenplay also won an Oscar, but Wilson and Foreman were ignored, and the little gold man went to Pierre Boule, the French author of the original novel, even though Boule didn’t speak, much less write, a word of English.

Mike picked me up at my hotel and drove me out to the lovely estate they had leased from the heirs of the French actor Gerard Philipe, who had died tragically only the year before. I explained my mission to Mike.

“The Tour de France, as you may know, is more than a bicycle race. It’s a major event, a spectacle with hundreds of cars, trucks, and caravans moving along the route behind the cyclists.”

Mike nodded. He knew this. I continued, “Every night, in a different town, they celebrate with music, entertainers, shows of all kinds. It seems like a natural for a big splashy movie with all the entertainment plus the dangerous competition of the cyclists on the road.”

“And you have people from France, Italy, Spain, Holland, Belgium, Poland . . . every country of Europe,” added Mike.

“Exactly, there has to be a movie in this.”

“How’s your French?” he asked.

“Not very good,” I admitted. “I’ll need help.”

“I think I know someone who can get you going,” he offered.

Mike had been writing the script for *Lawrence of Arabia* and had just finished his draft; he had not yet even turned it in to David Lean, the director. He gave it to me to read.

Mike kept his promise and had me out to their place again a few days later to meet with the great French actress Simone Signoret, who knew everyone who was anyone in Paris. She arranged for me to meet with the people at the sports journal *L’Équipe*, who were the actual sponsors of the race. With their help, I started my reading and research into the history and all the facts about the race.

But before I had gotten very far, I had an unexpected call from Irving Lerner, who was working for Yordan in Madrid. They wanted me to come down and rewrite a script they were planning to put into production.

Since they agreed to pay me \$5,000 for four weeks’ work, I was eager to accept. I made a few telephone calls to Hollywood and arranged to postpone further work on the Tour de France project for four weeks.

I flew to Madrid, settled into a suite at the Hilton Hotel, and turned out a completely new script for *The Day of the Triffids* in less than four weeks. Yordan was so satisfied with my work that he was prepared to offer me a term contract—but in his own peculiar way. A half dozen of us were sitting around in the huge, round, marble lobby of the hotel; waiters would bring our drinks from the bar. Yordan turned to me. “You want to stay here and work with me?”

I didn’t even try to sound casual. “Sure.”

Right to the point. “What do you want?”

I glanced around at the other slaves who were working for peanuts. I jumped right in with demands that sounded reasonable to me: \$1,000 a

week in salary plus \$250 a week for family expenses, tickets for my wife and daughter to get here, a deal long enough to make it worthwhile—and he would have to provide the money to reimburse the people in Hollywood who had paid me to come to Europe.

“Okay,” he said.

I was hardly prepared for this. “Write it out,” I managed.

He glanced around the lobby. “Write it out where?”

I offered him the back of one of the large bar bills lying on the table. “Write on this.”

“I don’t have a pen.”

I produced a pen from my pocket.

“Real writers don’t walk around with pens in their pockets,” he sniffed. “When are you leaving?”

“Tomorrow morning. Ten o’clock flight.”

“I’ll see you in the morning.”

And he did call me down to his room at the last minute, and we typed out a paragraph with my terms on a flimsy sheet of paper. That was it. I returned briefly to Paris, settled with the Tour de France people, refunded all the money they had advanced, assigned to them all rights to the project, and made my excuses to my new friends at *L’Équipe*, who were busy preparing for the next race. I called Jean and asked her to wait until she received the two airline tickets before considering this a deal. Then I returned to Madrid.

How did I feel about settling down to live and work in a country run by Francisco Franco, a brutal Fascist dictator who had butchered in cold blood over a million soldiers, activists, and plain “enemy” loyalists *after* the conclusion of the civil war?

Uncomfortable, uneasy, perhaps guilty for whatever extent I might be considered to be participating in the functioning of this government. I had left my own country because I had suffered political persecution there. How would I be treated here, where the government was infinitely worse?

I soon realized that I was working in a cocoon of privilege provided by the Spanish because of their need for the foreign hard currency imported by the film companies. Clearly we were exempt from any persecution so long as we remained isolated from domestic politics. Another case of extraterritoriality. I also understood that, as a foreigner, I could have absolutely nothing to do with whatever political struggles might be going on, even if I had wanted that. Would I in some way be contributing to the oppression of the Spanish people? It didn’t seem so.

Also, it was immediately made clear that the Spanish police were well aware of my identity. Yordan warned me that he had been informed that the Spanish were following the activities of my friend Irving Lerner. Why him and not me? In any event, I eventually learned that I was indeed on their list of suspects. But they didn't care so long as I kept my nose clean.

Finally, of course, there was an undeniable element of opportunism. I couldn't work openly at home. But here I could (and did) become a very significant player in major motion picture production.

Back in the Madrid Hilton, I had to wait a week for a new assignment. It was during this week that a crisis occurred: Sophia Loren backed out of her contract for *El Cid*. She complained that she had no really personal scenes, no love scenes in the film, and she didn't consider the role acceptable. Ever frugal, Yordan put me to work. "Write three or four love scenes for Loren and Heston." Well, Tony Mann had originally asked me to write a love scene for Heston and his beloved horse. I felt better equipped for this new job. I read the script for the first time, decided where the new scenes might fit, and churned them out. When they were sent to Rome, Loren accepted them and agreed to report to work for the film. Production could begin. I had reason to feel I had earned a great deal more than my week's pay and Bronston's pesetas. Since my contribution amounted to less than a dozen pages, I never asked for or received screen credit for this work, but I was in no mood to complain. My life in Europe had truly begun.

I set to work with a new associate. Sheldon Reynolds had had a successful career in France producing a detective series for American television, "Foreign Intrigue," which followed the adventures of an American private eye who always wore the same trench coat as he wandered around the continent from city to city, chasing bad guys. The series started in 1954, had run its course by 1960, and Reynolds wanted to do something more substantial—direct a feature film. Yordan had apparently agreed to work with him on a film about Captain Kidd, the pirate.

Shelley Reynolds arrived in Madrid gung-ho to get started. He didn't have a story, much less a script. The *Triffids* script was barely on the shelf when I was into *Captain Kidd*.

The bureau, as always, took a keen interest in my European peregrinations. The file notes that "he traveled in France, Spain, England, Italy, and Switzerland from 8/4/60 to 7/16/62, arriving in Spain on June 26, 1962" (53). I actually arrived in Spain around October 1, 1960, to begin

my association with Yordan in Europe. Again, the reports are fuzzy, not to say confused. Why don't they get these plain facts right? It is true that after settling to work for Yordan in 1960 I did make short trips to England, Italy, and Switzerland in 1961 and 1962: a quick run over to London to keep my French visitor's status; a fun week in the snow in St. Moritz; perhaps a quick jaunt to visit Julian in Rome. If so, it is comforting to learn that the FBI never lost sight of me, that I was safe in their keeping.

But their determined surveillance of me, virtually day by day, began only after I settled into my writing career in Europe.

[Guidelines for the FBI were first established in 1976.] The [above] guidelines were sparked by revelations that in the 1960s and 1970s, the FBI COINTELPRO initiative targeted perfectly lawful antiwar, environmental, feminist and civil rights groups for widespread monitoring, infiltration and disinformation.

But even under the guidelines abuses continued . . . One of the most prominent involved an investigation of the Committee in Solidarity With the People of El Salvador (CISPES) from 1983 to 1985. Under the rubric of counter-terrorism, the FBI monitored student rallies, infiltrated meetings and identified attendees at CISPES events. In the end, the bureau had collected information on 1330 groups, including Oxfam America, the US Catholic Conference and a Cincinnati order of nuns—but no evidence of crime.

“LEASH THE FBI,” DAVID COLE, *The Nation*, JUNE 24, 2002

17. The Good Life

Back in Madrid, my paychecks (in dollars) were deposited regularly into my Los Angeles bank account. Whatever Yordan's arrangement was with Bronston, it seemed that I was able to stay in a suite at the Hilton with meals and everything paid for by the studio. The perks even included a weekly visit from an accountant, who would hand me a thick wad of Spanish pesetas that I really had no way to spend.

Word came from Jean that she had received the two first-class round-trip tickets on TWA from Los Angeles to Paris. I told her to take a thousand dollars and buy herself some new clothes and some warm clothing for the French winter.

During the last week of October, Shelley and I, along with Yordan, shifted our operation to Paris, where I awaited the arrival of my family. Jean and Ellen arrived on my birthday, October 29, 1960. Because I had to work and earn my salary, Jean had the job of hunting for a place for us to live. She finally settled on a place in the town of Vaucresson, about twenty miles from Paris and adjoining the town of Versailles. This had the advantage of being closer to the English School of Paris where we enrolled Ellen so she could be with friends, the two Wilson daughters, who also attended that school.

I worked alternately at home in Vaucresson, in a fine room with a fireplace, and in Shelley's Paris hotel apartment. Work on the script was going well. Both Shelley and Yordan were pleased.

Whether such matters interested the FBI, I don't know, but at this time political affairs were heating up in France. De Gaulle had definitely committed to leaving Algeria. The French military adamantly opposed this and threatened to rebel against their old general. There was a serious alarm that the army based in Algeria, with its guns, tanks, and planes, would stage a coup by flying into Paris and taking over the government. Early one morning our housekeeper woke us with news from the radio that De Gaulle had called on the citizens of Paris to collect arms, which would be distributed to them at the Invalides army depot, and prepare to resist an invasion. We listened to the radio ourselves and could only understand a few of his words when he pleaded, "*Citoyens de Paris. Aidez-moi! Aidez-moi!*" Other citizens were urged to stay home and stay off the streets. I didn't think I was called on to collect a rifle, and so decided to stay home.

I called Yordan and told him why I wouldn't be coming into Paris that morning. He, of course, knew nothing about the emergency and cared even less. He could only grumble that any excuse would serve to keep people away from work. In truth, I can't recall in all the years I spent with him ever hearing him express any interest in anything political or, indeed, in anything other than the project or projects currently engaging him.

The invasion didn't occur. The scare was over, temporarily, though for several more years the diehards in France engaged in terrorist tactics, planting plastique bombs aimed at left-wing Frenchmen who favored severing the colonial connection with Algeria. A number of my French friends were targets for these bombs. I wonder whether my casual acquaintance with some of these French left-wingers, who were actually supporters of De Gaulle, may explain the FBI interest in me during those years. But for us, it was work as usual, turning out pages on Captain Kidd.

In early December, Shelley persuaded Yordan to let us both drive up to St. Moritz, where Shelley had an apartment. Shelley wanted to ski, and he promised that we would work as hard as ever up there to turn out pages. We took off in his Alfa Romeo. Jean and Ellen were decently settled in Vaucresson, where our domineering French *bonne* had things under control. Ellen had connected with the local riding stable, and Jean had many friends among our colony of Hollywood blacklistees. I felt guilty at leaving them, but was able to live with that.

Shelley and I had scarcely unloaded our bags in his St. Moritz apartment when he insisted we go over to the Palace Hotel to pay our respects to Cappy, whom I had never met. Cappy was Phil Yordan's second ex-wife. She had only recently divorced Yordan and had quickly married a Mr. Badrutt, who was the principal owner of the Palace Hotel. It's no exaggeration to say that this was the premier resort hotel of Switzerland. Everyone from the Shah of Iran to the heir to the Opel motor fortune stayed at the Palace when in St. Moritz.

Shelley, an avid skier, was out on the slopes much of the day while I stayed in and wrote. But determined to make me a skier, Shelley introduced me to his ski instructor, who gave private lessons for a reasonable hourly fee. Soon I was up on the slopes, trying the man's patience with my clumsy efforts. Even a professional ski-meister was not sufficient to turn me into a confident athlete in the snow during a few days at St. Moritz; plus, we had get back to Paris. Subsequently there were

other trips to St. Moritz, and Jean got to enjoy being a guest at the Palace Hotel.

Early in the spring of 1961 I completed the Captain Kidd script. Now it was up to Shelley to find financing. At various times he came up with promises from Cinerama and others, but nothing ever jelled. Yordan lost interest in the project, so this became another unproduced script of mine.

Yordan was preoccupied with his effort to find another major production for Bronston following *El Cid*. I finally came up with an idea he bought: a different kind of circus story. Not the conventional one of the girl trapeze artist and the lion tamer, but one that would have a unique, free form, about a great circus entrepreneur moving through many countries, taking advantage of all of the European locations to find daring stunts in colorful venues. I was thinking of unforgettable images like Blondin, the aerialist, walking a tightrope over Niagara Falls.

Sold. Nick Ray had a deal for a picture with Bronston. He liked the circus idea, and I was set to work developing a treatment.

Jean had been busy with volunteer work at the English School. In appreciation of her efforts, and perhaps because we were considered glamorous American film people who could be useful, and interesting, we were invited to a party at the estate of a certain Marquis de Rozier, who was the chief French sponsor of the school. A colonel in the French army, the marquis lived in a chateau in Brittany. Jean and I dressed in our best, had the car washed, and set out at twilight on a spring evening.

We arrived as dusk was closing around the handsome chateau and its extensive grounds and stables. Teachers and other school staff, plus a few invited parents and spouses, were gathered in a large salon. Records played dance music; attentive waiters passed hors d'oeuvres and good champagne. After a while, we were surprised at how relaxed, then rowdy, the party was becoming. The very plain-looking English teachers were really letting their hair down. Before things got out of hand, we were ushered into the large formal dining room. Beside each of our name cards there were small ceramic figurines, *carte de menu* tablets with the dinner menu written out on their rough surfaces. I had never seen these before. The menu looked splendid, the white-gloved waiters were most attentive, and the food and flowing wine did not disappoint.

Though we were surfeited, the dancing resumed after dinner. Some of the men insisted on dancing with Jean, and some of the women were equally persistent about dancing with me. The marquis, splendid in his

officer's dress uniform, his gleaming boots polished to an obsidian finish, danced a mean dance, and increasingly monopolized Jean. She and I began to get the notion that this party was not expected to conclude with any of us standing on our feet.

This impression was fortified when the hour became quite late and people began to talk about bedding down upstairs — there were accommodations for all. Our notions of repressed and proper English schoolmarm were fading fast. But Jean and I were not prepared for this kind of party, nor did we find any of the potential partners irresistible. What's more, it became less and less clear whether the marquis was more interested in Jean or in me. Perhaps any Hollywood partner would do. We insisted on leaving, using the excuse that I had to get to work the next day at an early hour. We felt like killjoys, and it was very clear that the others were disappointed in us.

For me, the most interesting spin on this event came some years later. Resettled in Madrid, we read in the Paris *Herald Tribune* that our host, the marquis, had been arrested as one of the principal conspirators against De Gaulle, the military people who were setting off plastique bombs all around Paris. He evidently had been using his school connection as an innocent cover for his activity. So there, J. Edgar Hoover, make the most of that.

In April, when my initial six months were up, Yordan signed a new contract with me that guaranteed another year of employment at \$1500 a week and stipulated that I would produce one film a year as a full partner. I liked the sound of becoming a producer but didn't take it too seriously, except to worry that he might try to use that promise to bargain away my salary. However, in a curious way it did eventually work out that I became a producer for him.

New contract in hand, Jean and I moved from Vaucresson to an elegant apartment on rue Leroux in the 16th *arrondissement* in Paris, as noted by the FBI (66). Ellen, who had had a bellyful of the War of the Roses at the English school, moved to the American School of Paris. I continued to work on the circus script, sometimes consulting with Nick Ray. When that script was finished, it was approved by Ray and Bronston, but suddenly was nixed because Mrs. Bronston decided that after the success of *El Cid*, this was not an elevated enough subject for a Bronston epic.

For the following year, I struggled to get a script out of another project, *55 Days at Peking*, a story about the Boxer Rebellion in China at the turn of the century. Nick Ray was switched to this project. It was urgent

to get another film underway so that money could be raised and the studio overhead paid. I was under so much pressure that I began to run a constant low-grade fever, and there were times I felt I couldn't continue. To keep me going, Yordan promised me a \$50,000 bonus if the film got produced (from my script, of course). That did keep me at the anvil. On location outside of Madrid, crews started to build expensive sets of the foreign compound in Peking and of the wall of the Forbidden City even before I was confident that I really had a story. I worried feverishly. Would I be drawn and quartered if, after all this, I didn't deliver a final script?

Eventually, Charlton Heston read my most recent draft, agreed to play the role, and signed a lucrative contract with Bronston. Ava Gardner also signed on after I had rewritten a part for her. Without reading the script but liking the pay, David Niven signed to play the supporting actor in the role of the British ambassador. And production actually got going. By now, I was commuting to Spain and living in the Castellana Hilton much of the time, but the demands for script changes went on and on and so did my low-grade fever. The hotel doctor was concerned about my condition. "You need to take a break, a vacation, a rest . . ."

"Good advice," I muttered. "Tell that to Yordan." To my surprise, he did.

"What do you want to do?" Yordan asked me.

"I want a week off. You don't have to pay me. Just extend the contract for a week."

"Where will you go?"

"To a beach somewhere."

"What will you do there?"

"Rest on the sand."

"What will you do the second day?"

He wasn't kidding. For him, the prospect of being anywhere without a telephone or a deal cooking was insupportable. But I was granted a week off. I took off for Monte Carlo. Jean and Ellen were visiting in California that summer, so I went alone. I was just beginning to unwind at the elegant old Hermitage Hotel when, on the second night, the telephone rang. It was Yordan. David Niven, who was scheduled to start work, had decided he didn't like his role and refused to report. This with the film already in production!

"I'm not telling you to come back . . ." from Yordan. But I did go back. In Madrid, I asked him what I could do. As always, he had an answer. "Write a Hamlet scene for him. You know, he's the British ambas-

sador who insists that they all stay to fight off the Boxers. He's agonizing before his wife, taking responsibility for what may happen to all of them in the foreign compound. You know: "Should I, or shouldn't I?" I knew what he meant.

"How can Niven do that?" I asked. "We're already in production. It's very unprofessional."

"Movie stars," he grumbled. "They're all alike. I offered to let him out of his contract, but he didn't want that."

I wrote the scene. Niven read it and agreed to come to work.

When Heston learned that Niven had gotten a special scene written for him, he stopped work in the middle of production one day and refused to go on unless he, too, got another scene. I was now supposedly working on a rewrite of the circus script. Yordan burst into my room and said they needed a new scene right away. The halt in production was costing a fortune. Every hour. "What kind of scene?"

"Write him a scene with a kid. That always works." He gave me an hour, came back, and over my protests that I hadn't even read them myself, ripped the pages out of the typewriter, took them onto the set, and showed them to Heston. Work resumed.

Ava Gardner didn't quite follow the pattern. She was drinking heavily, making life on the set very difficult. One day, instead of asking for another scene, she just took off, and couldn't be located. What to do? It was close to the end of the film, but not the end of her role. I asked about the last scene she had shot. She had been wounded in the action and was being treated in the hospital by the doctor played by Paul Lukas. I suggested that they put another body in the bed and have Lukas pull a sheet over it. They did. No more Ava Gardner. Few people, seeing the film, complained about the sudden disappearance of the Ava Gardner character.

Nick Ray, struggling through all this, had a heart attack before the completion of the film. He went to the British-American Hospital and eventually recovered. The second unit director, Andrew Marton, took over the film. I did not have a heart attack, but I went off the circus script and onto a new project, *The Thin Red Line*, from the James Jones novel. I suppose the \$50,000 bonus I was paid helped.

During these hectic days, I had little time for outside activities, treasonous or otherwise. But Hoover never gave up on me. As noted in the file, during 1962-1965 he earnestly involved the embassy of every country I visited, and, finally, since that wasn't getting him anywhere, he appealed to the CIA. The file includes a two-page letter dated October 18,

1962, from J. Edgar Hoover to James Jesus Angleton of the CIA requesting cooperation in tailing me (33, 34). By that time, of course, I had long been busy working in Europe. But the date is one of the most significant ones in the history of the world because it was in that very month, almost on that very day, that the Cuban missile crisis came to a head and we all just managed to escape atomic annihilation. Yet here is Angleton of the CIA, who evidently never tipped to developments in Cuba, getting involved with me. According to Tom Mangold's appalling and definitive biography, *Cold Warrior: James Jesus Angleton: The CIA's Master Spy Hunter*, Angleton was certifiably paranoid and eventually succeeded in destroying the entire counterintelligence machinery of the CIA.

In August of this same year, Martin Luther King aroused America and much of the world with his "I Have a Dream" speech at the Washington Mall. This event so alarmed Hoover (since it held out the possibility of ending racism in America) that he took time off from worrying about me to begin his determined program to destroy King by planting illegal bugs in King's room in the Willard Hotel in Washington.

Although the thought is chilling, I confess to feeling a certain amount of vanity in knowing that two of America's most powerful spooks took the time to make certain I was being watched while I was writing and making dangerously subversive films in Spain like *The Day of the Triffids*, *55 Days at Peking*, *The Thin Red Line*, *Battle of the Bulge*, *Krakatoa*, *East of Java*, *Custer of the West*, *Pancho Villa*, and *Horror Express*.

In addition to the activities already described, Yordan sent me to London to do my first work as a producer. The completed film of *The Day of the Triffids* had been rejected by Allied Artists and by Rank, major American and British distributors, because the special effects were useless. Only sixty minutes of the original could be salvaged. To flesh out the film, I wrote a new thirty-minute segment, a story in the lighthouse, with two new British actors and a single set. I hired Oscar-winning cameraman Freddie Francis to direct it. He was eager to become a director, and he did a fine job. This was one of the times when Hoover had the "Legat" in the London embassy busy watching me (56, 58, 60).

Later, in Paris, Yordan called to say Allied Artists and Rank loved the new version.

The year 1962 was one of the busiest of my life: I knocked myself out trying to get *55 Days at Peking* scripted, a new version of *The Circus Story* written, a script written for *The Thin Red Line*, and an entirely new thirty-minute segment for *Day of the Triffids* produced in London. All the while, the bureau was maintaining its passionate interest in me.

There is a memo dated July 12, 1962, from the SAC, Los Angeles—apparently about a letter to Hoover—copies of which were sent by registered mail to bureau headquarters, New York, Boston, and the Washington Field Office (40). Since I had never been to Boston or known anyone there, that connection is a mystery—or just plain dumb.

There is a long memo dated July 25, 1962, from the SAC in New York, of which about half the pages made it into the file and more than ninety percent of those are blacked out (43–47). Since during much of that time I was doing my very first film producing in London, what could be under all that black ink? What had stirred up the feds when my career was arguably at its most productive and least suspicious?

There is another long (at least seven-page) memo, this one from the SAC at the Washington Field Office to Hoover and dated October 9, 1962 (50–55). Copies of this extensive memo are eventually forwarded to Paris, Bern, Madrid, and Rome (56). Through pages and pages of solid black, a few bits of text shine through. I am reborn (52), and also issued a passport in Madrid on July 16, 1962.

Unhappy, perhaps, with its own inability to find any dirt on me, the bureau enlisted the aid of the Security Division of U.S. State Department in seeking pertinent information about me (54). When I applied to the State Department under the FOIA for any files they might have had on me, they falsely denied that there were any. The bureau suggested that legats “determine if the authorities in the foreign countries visited by GORDON have any pertinent information concerning BERNARD GORDON.” Does this mean the authorities of foreign governments? Were foreign intelligence services being brought to bear on me and my family? The last paragraph mentions “utilizing anonymous source techniques if the GORDONs are still out of the country,” etc., etc. What in the world are they seeking?

By November 27, 1962, I was back in Paris after the London stint, but the legat in London is reporting to Hoover (58). The next day, the SAC at the Washington Field Office wrote to Hoover (59). Despite the best efforts of the FBI, including trying to connect me with other “suspects,” checking with the “Security Office, U.S. Department of State,” and even consulting the “records of G-2, Fort Holabird, Maryland,” through the “Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff of Intelligence, Pentagon,” “no pertinent information concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON” was uncovered.

First, what in the hell were they looking for about me at the Pentagon? Seems alarming, but of course anything “useful” is blacked out.

Was there anything useful? Second, although this memo makes it sound as if the bureau was at last losing interest in me (“file review concerning the subject has been completed,” “no pertinent information”), hundreds more pages would be added to my file over the next eight years.

A side note: A slightly earlier letter written on the formal letterhead of the Department of Justice repeats my father’s name and the year and place of his birth (61). It also has the correct year of my mother’s birth, but the wrong place. A small blacked-out bit almost certainly refers to my wife, who was born in Morgantown, West Virginia. The letter also says I “claimed to be an author by profession.” Suspicious? Copies of this were destroyed on June 19, 1970. I wonder how many more file pages have been destroyed?

A little later (December 27, 1962), the SAC in New York weighs in with a review of my college records (62). Did I keep them working through the Christmas holidays? This strikes me as particularly interesting since I last attended CCNY in 1940. “His file contains no information concerning any clubs which he might have belonged to or any outside activity which he may have participated in while attending school.” Now this, of course, annoys me. It ignores my very public involvement in the Film and Sprockets Society, which I describe in some detail in an earlier chapter and consider a most important aspect of my college years. But more importantly, why are they going back and what are they fishing for? Are they trying to connect me with Julius Rosenberg, who was a student there at about the same time, as mentioned earlier? The memo also conveys that I have been living in Europe for several years and have “recently indicated [to whom?] that he will not return to the U.S. for about 2 years.”

A memo from Madrid dated the day after Christmas is copied to all the cities previously mentioned, plus Newark (63). I was only ever there when exiting from the Holland Tunnel.

A long summary memo from the SAC in Los Angeles (dated January 3, 1963) contains little of interest, except that we were leasing the house on Curson Avenue in Hollywood to the Consulate General of the Dominican Republic (64 – 67). And even here the startling conclusion is that there is “no other information indicating association between the Consul of the Dominican Republic and BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.” What a reach! A rental agent had leased it while we were abroad. Our only contact with the consul general’s office occurred when we finally returned to California and found that someone had put an ice pick through the freezer coils of our refrigerator and had broken or

stolen much of our valuable glassware. The memo also notes that there is no information “from informants cognizant of CP” about any of my activities in Los Angeles since June 1959, the same month I “entered the United Kingdom from Calais, France” (66). Not a word about how seasick we all got on the ferry to Dover.

My wife makes one of her rare appearances in this memo. She is the “she” who “was reliably reported as a member of the Communist Political Association (CPA) at Los Angeles in 1943 under the name [BLACKED OUT]” (67). Big news that. More interesting: “No information is currently known as to the storage place of the property of BERNARD [BLACKED OUT] therefore, no consideration is being given at this time to development of an anonymous source in this regard.” What were they looking for? Secret files or tapes? Did they want to read my old scripts for coded messages? Were they considering pulling off a black-bag job and rummaging through my belongings in storage? Sometimes it seems as though they were a bunch of kids playing a game of “Catch a Spy.”

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No matter that patriotism is too often the refuge of scoundrels.
Dissent, rebellion, and all-around hell-raising remain the true duty
of patriots.

BARBARA EHRENREICH, *The Worst Years of Our Lives*, 1991

18. Tumult in Madrid

The year 1963 was one of the busiest for both me and the FBI (64-94). During that year the FBI clearly could not believe that someone with my limited talent could be employed for so long, at such good pay, doing nothing more than writing scripts for stars like Charlton Heston, David Niven, Ava Gardner, Robert Shaw, and many others. The bureau was so assiduous that on at least one occasion their reports bracketed Christmas. Nothing could persuade them that I was an innocent abroad. I must have been using the film work as a cover for a dangerous secret existence.

All I can say is that the cover-up film work was damned exhausting and left me very little energy for posing a threat to the domestic security of the United States. In the early weeks of that year I was never certain whether I was working on *55 Days at Peking*, *The Circus Story*, or *The Thin Red Line*—or all of them. Yordan was plugging for the production of *The Circus Story* because that would help keep production going for Bronston and also guarantee him another \$400,000 fee for supplying the script. In order to make progress with this, I had to revamp the original version of the script into a more conventionally personal story of the type I had eschewed. I now had the job of rewriting the script to the new marching orders. Also, Yordan wanted his independent production of *The Thin Red Line* to go ahead because he had a commitment for financing and distribution from Allied Artists. But before actual production began on that film, the principal pressure was to complete the script of *55 Days at Peking* because production plans were well advanced and sets were being built.

Didn't they have a script? Yes. But no one was really happy with it, and constant changes were asked for by the stars, by Nick Ray, and, for all I knew, by Bronston's wife, Dorothea.

Under these conditions I was spending most of my time away from home, back in the Madrid Hilton working with Nick Ray. Nick and I saw eye to eye on most script changes because we both preferred the development of a personal story. I would spend weeks with him writing batches of pages. Yordan would suddenly pop up in Madrid from somewhere and throw out the pages I had written. He didn't want a personal drama, like Nick's *Rebel Without a Cause*. This had to be action, battles, the rebellion of the Chinese masses against the Western powers, and

enough fireworks so that illiterates the world over could appreciate it even without dialogue or subtitles. Back to square one.

By the spring of 1963, Yordan had moved to Madrid with his entire entourage, including me. I had to move back into the Hilton and leave Jean home on the rue Leroux until Ellen's school term ended in June. Another wrenching adjustment for them. After finally arriving in Madrid with Ellen in the little Renault, Jean looked fruitlessly all over Madrid and its outskirts for a house or apartment to rent while we hung in at the Hilton. Then it was suggested that we move, at least temporarily, into the apartment that had been leased for Sophia Loren when she had been working on *El Cid*. We looked. It was an enormous, rather dreary apartment with high ceilings and many more rooms than we could possibly occupy, a place that might have appealed to a woman whose girlhood had been spent in the crowded slums of Naples. But it was acceptable as a temporary refuge, and we moved in.

The apartment, in an old building, had the advantage of facing the main park in Madrid, and it was convenient to the Hilton where I would be working and to the studio. We found out quickly that our upstairs neighbor was a loony old duchess who lived with a wild variety of people and animals — dogs, cats, monkeys, and even a small alligator residing in a plastic pool that was located right above our bedroom and leaked down on us while we tried to sleep. The duchess had a love-hate relationship with film people, and though as fascinated by us as she may have been by Sophia Loren, she also felt the need to compete. So she equipped her “crew” with a 16 mm camera and proceeded to make movies. She had evidently decided to demonstrate that we were not the only ones in the film business.

She would send weird messages down to our Spanish housekeeper. The duchess said she wanted to hire the woman away from us. Our Anna Maria was terrified of the crazy lady and threatened to quit if we didn't move away. When the ceiling above our bed leaked down on us, we complained to the building concierge. He helplessly explained that the pool where the duchess kept her alligator was just above our bed and that there was nothing he could do since she had owned the apartment for at least fifty years. Besides, she was a duchess. We moved our bed. When the duchess discovered that that ploy to annoy us no longer worked, we began finding dog turds in several of our rooms that opened on a large central courtyard. Dog turds? We really puzzled over that. We had no animals, nor did any have access to the apartment. We finally realized that either her minions or the duchess herself, whose apartment

was directly above ours and opened onto the same courtyard, was deliberately tossing these turds through the open windows of our apartment. Closing the windows was the answer, but this was becoming a hot summer, there was no air conditioning, and the solution left us uncomfortable. Although we found this all colorful in a mad sort of way, we knew we couldn't live with it. I wonder if in the FBI pages of the middle of that year, concealed under one of the blacked-out sections, there is any mention of our dealings with the Spanish duchess. Aided by the ever vigilant CIA, the bureau may have suspected the duchess of being a clever Soviet agent who was sending me messages or payoffs buried in the dog turds. I should have looked more closely. In any case, we finally moved.

I pushed Yordan into another year's extension of my contract with a raise to \$2,000 a week, and we found a fine seignorial apartment, beautifully furnished, in a more convenient location. By now, *Peking* had been shot, so there were fewer calls on me. *The Circus Story* was another matter: Bronston, allegedly drunk in Rome, had encountered Frank Capra and offered him the assignment of directing the circus film. This was an irritating reprise of what had occurred with David Niven a year before. Capra came to work in Madrid, took up residence in the Hilton, and proceeded to write his own version of the script. Despite earnest pleas from Yordan, he would let no one see what he was writing. He finally handed it proudly to Yordan, who read it, then, without a word, handed it to me. Coming from this great and highly respected filmmaker, it was an unbelievable, incomprehensible mishmash. I reluctantly admitted to Yordan that I simply didn't understand it. He nodded. Capra was shipped. A new director had to be found. And it had to be someone John Wayne would trust and sign on with, even though there was no script to show him.

Henry Hathaway was hired. Hathaway was a real curmudgeon who, like Capra, refused to let anyone see what he was writing while working on the script. Very alarmed, Yordan kept me rewriting the circus story, but Hathaway would look at nothing I wrote. Yordan brought in the biggest name writer he could find, Ben Hecht, at a thousand dollars a day. But Hathaway wouldn't look at Hecht's pages either. At least I got to go down the hall and introduce myself to Hecht. For me, it was like shaking hands with Shakespeare. But after less than two weeks of futile effort, Hecht was gone, too.

By now, believe it or not, I had completed my draft of *The Thin Red Line*. Andrew Marton was signed to direct. Another Yordan project, *Crack in the World*, for which I had supplied the central premise and

much of the story, was now being written by a Welsh writer, Jon Manchip White, who had been brought down from London more than a year before to write English dialogue for Niven's British ambassador in *Peking*. But Manchip White had no knack for American screenplays, and not a line of his was ever used. Now, while I was busy on other projects, he was trying to write a script for *Crack in the World*. Yordan wanted me on another new project, so he brought Julian from Rome to work with Manchip White on *Crack*. I was moved over to work with Richard Fleischer, a director, to get a screen story out of the complex novel *Nightrunners of Bengal* by the British novelist John Masters. Nothing came of this, and I was moved over to adapt Aldous Huxley's science-fiction classic, *Brave New World*.

The file contains a memo dated November 18, 1963 (94). The date strikes me as especially interesting. This was only four days before the assassination of President Kennedy. What was the FBI concentrating on? Were they watching Oswald, about whom they had considerable alarming information? Apparently not. From all we have learned since, they were not following the man who assassinated Kennedy. But some of them were following me.

The Welsh writer broke the news of the assassination while we were enjoying dinner in a new fish restaurant in Madrid. I remember the moment well, as do so many Americans. We were shocked at the cruel brutality of the event. And rightly or wrongly, like so many others we had been enchanted with the Camelot legend surrounding the Kennedys and were fearful of what to expect from the succession of Johnson.

By this time the production of *Cry of Battle* had been completed in the Philippines, and I asked Joe Steinberg to put my real name on the credits as screenwriter. This was possible because Dalton Trumbo had successfully cracked the blacklist with credit for the scripts of *Exodus* and *Spartacus*. Joe was delighted to agree, and my first post-blacklist credit was on *Cry of Battle*. With this under my belt, I went to Yordan and asked for credit on *55 Days at Peking*. He demurred, explaining that part of the basic package agreed to by Allied Artists, which had financed the film, called for him to write the script. Finally, though, he agreed that I might add my name *under* his in the credits, if Bronston would agree. It was done, and I received my first credit for a major film, even if it was not the solo credit that I had earned. Consequently, by the time *The Thin Red Line* was ready for titles, the blacklist issue was no longer debatable. I got my solo credit.

If it appears that during 1963 I was too busy to conspire against the United States, it's because that was the truth. Others were busy. At the Bronston studio they were producing *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, a project I'm pleased to say with which I had nothing to do. Down at the Barcelona harbor, Hathaway was busy shooting *Circus World*, which became the release title of that film. But with the very heavy amounts spent on *Empire* by director Anthony Mann, who was now out of control, the Bronston organization was rapidly going broke. The fifteen-million-dollar budget was truly monstrous for the time, and when the film was a flop, Bronston was finished.

Yordan, of course, had seen it coming and had been preparing to land on his feet. He succeeded in interesting Warner Bros. in a new project, *Battle of the Bulge*. He returned from Hollywood to Madrid with Warners' promise in his pocket, but no deal. A preliminary arrangement had been made based on an early draft of a script written by a new writer, John Melson. Yordan had to come up with an acceptable script. When he arrived in Madrid, my contract with him had less than two weeks to run. I was certainly willing to release him from that obligation, but he wanted something else. He wanted me to write a new version of *Battle of the Bulge*, or as much of it as I could do in the remaining eight or nine days.

We both worked like mad turning out pages. I was in the odd position of reading the pages that he handed me and rejecting them. But finally, he handed me a scene I liked, and I agreed that one of the scenes he himself wrote in an adjoining room was okay. When the time was up, we had about ninety pages of mine and one scene of his, more than two-thirds of a script. He had no more time. He thanked me, bid me goodbye, and rushed back to Hollywood with the pages in hand.

Two weeks before I finished up with Yordan, the FBI was wondering if the CIA had any information about any plans I may have had for returning to the United States (125). They really did seem to be on top of things there. We might well have been having such thoughts, but I can't recall discussing this with anyone except my wife. But if they knew I was finishing up my work in Europe with Yordan and Bronston, they might well have considered the possibility of a return to the States. And if they were as close as that to what I was doing and thinking, why were they relentlessly pursuing me as if I might be about to do something nasty?

July 2, 1965: a memorable date. Having just finished my contract and work with Yordan, I'm ready to begin a vacation. But Washington

is still right on top of me (123). I was now without a contract and off the payroll. Bronston was finished, never to recover. For me, the best days were over, or so it seemed.

But through all this and much to follow, the FBI never lost its interest in me, as the following pages will indicate. Memos about me were regularly copied to embassies and offices all over the world, including those in Los Angeles, Newark, New York, Washington, D.C., Bern, Paris, Madrid, and Rome (70). The FBI office in Mexico City even got in on the act (72).

An elegant memo in italics dated March 1, 1963, from the SAC at the Washington Field Office notes that the "Special Assignments Branch, Office of Security, Department of State," advised some special agent that reviewing the voluminous files of the "Commercial Policy Division" would be inconvenient, and further mentions someone named BEALE (74-76). I don't remember a spy or anyone else by that name.

On March 4, 1963, there was a letter from the American Embassy in Paris referring to a letter of December 20, 1962 (79). How busy everyone is. I keep thinking of the cost of all this. On March 28, 1963, there is more from Paris (80). Of course, I was living there.

In April, Los Angeles weighed in with much useless checking of old telephone numbers and reassured New York and Washington that they would be advised if GORDON should return to Los Angeles (81). A month later, the legat in London was requested to interview someone at the American Embassy in London (84). Who? Much blackout, then "WFO [Washington Field Office] files do not reflect any information concerning [BLACKED OUT] educational background." Surely not mine, which they knew only too well.

A very cryptic note dated July 30, 1963, is copied to offices in Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles (85). I never could figure out how Boston got into my file, and now there is Detroit, another city I've never even seen. The last page of a long memo (only three of at least four pages made it into the file) dated July 12, 1963, contains "LEADS" (wow!) from BOSTON, LOS ANGELES, and DETROIT, MICHIGAN (86-88). The Detroit leads hope to discover the identity of "business associates in his company believed to be in Flint, Michigan." What can this possibly be all about?! I have never been in Boston, Detroit, or Flint, nor, to my knowledge, have I had any contact with anyone from such cities.

The Boston plot thickens. A memo from there dated August 9, 1963, sadly reports that a "review of the files on [BLACKED OUT] failed to

indicate that he was acquainted with BERNARD WILLIS GORDON” or “that he was in Germany, France or Mexico during the period 1951–1954” (89). Who in the world was the blacked-out “he”?

In November, Los Angeles reported much more fruitless reviewing and the failure of its files “to reflect any information that [BLACKED OUT] was in contact with any of the above individuals” (90). Who are they trying to tie me to? Again and again, no “known association or contact with BERNARD GORDON.” And “[s]ince late 1960 [someone] has been reported as unemployed and lives from personal investments. A review of [BLACKED OUT] file reflects no known business associates who were chemical engineers.” It’s true, I never knew any chemical engineers. They have that right. But I wish to hell I knew what they were talking about or fishing for.

Another memo from November seems to indicate a search for records about me (or someone) at Georgetown University. Another bit of incongruity: I never saw the place, never drove by it, never was even in Washington, D.C. until a visit there in 1997.

These are only a few pages from the 280 pages released to me under the FOIA; they admit not sending an additional 202. More pages have been destroyed. But even though my file amounts to 500 pages or more, it doesn’t begin to compare with others that I will list.

Mr. Ashcroft asserted that those who criticized the extraordinary powers sought by the executive branch “aid terrorists,” “erode our national unity” and “give ammunition to America’s enemies.” The Attorney General’s charges suggest—as McCarthy’s did in the 1950s and as the American Council of Trustees and Alumni did last month—that dissent is tantamount to treason.

[Against such scurrilous accusations those who cherish freedom of speech, open debate, and due process of law must vigorously affirm that these values—not the imperatives of the national security state—are the core of our democratic traditions.] “They that give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety,” Benjamin Franklin warned, “deserve neither liberty nor safety.” Those who try to enforce conformity of views in the academy and who condemn critics as traitors have more in common with the Taliban than they do with the founders of our nation.

PROFESSOR JOEL BEININ, STANFORD UNIVERSITY, IN THE *Los Angeles Times*, DECEMBER 30, 2001 (BRACKETED MATERIAL WAS OMITTED IN THE VERSION PRINTED BY THE *Times*)

19. Beginning Again

At the end of June 1964, after Yordan left with the pages of *Battle of the Bulge*, it seemed like a good time to take a vacation. Jean, Ellen, and I drove up to Biarritz for a splendid week in one of the great hotels on the beach. Then we returned to Madrid and sent Ellen on her way to Portugal to visit with dear friends we had made in Paris. Jean and I decided to see the classical places we had always wanted to visit: Egypt, the pyramids, the Valley of the Kings, Luxor; Athens, the Acropolis, and the rest of mainland Greece; then a ferry ride to Crete for a wonderful week enjoying the island, the wonders of Knossos, and the Palace of Minos.

One of the most memorable experiences of a lifetime was our visit to the River Styx. After an adventurous drive through the virtually uninhabited interior of Crete, we found a small town at the foot of a mountain. In a bar there we hired a guide to take us far up the mountain to a cave where Zeus was born. We were only dimly acquainted with the Greek myth telling how Cronos, then the big god, consorted with Rhea, his sister, to produce offspring that he then swallowed in order to avert his own predicted destruction by one of his progeny. Fed up with the loss of her children, Rhea, by the time she gave birth to Zeus, managed to conceal the infant in a cave on Crete. For Zeus, she substituted a stone, which Cronos swallowed. When Zeus grew big enough, he did, in fact, destroy Cronos and became the big cheese himself. Having trudged the last stretch up a rocky path almost to the top of the mountain, we came to an ominous hole down which we had to drop. The pitch black cave was illuminated only by the candles we had brought, which our guide lit and floated down the river on little newspaper “boats” he devised. In the dim light we could see the river flowing past and the hundreds of small votive figures which had been placed here over the centuries. It all seemed very scary and very real.

If the FBI followed us to this classical place between life and death, the only hint is the sentence “The travels of GORDON, [BLACKED OUT] have been noted with interest” (177).

We returned to Madrid to face contemporary reality: What to do to get to work and earn money?

Julian and I decided to write an original screenplay, a spec script based on a news story I had seen in *Time* magazine some weeks earlier about the death of a German general and statesman, Paul Von Lettow-

Vorbeck, who had had a unique and fascinating career during World War I. At the outbreak of the war he had been a colonel in charge of a ragtag collection of troops, mostly Africans who had been pressed into service by the German military in East Africa. Annoyed at being excluded from the real action in Europe, he decided against all logic to do his duty to the Fatherland by conducting his own war against the British in Africa.

It was inconceivable this colonel could wage a meaningful war. But that's what he did for more than four years, running the British ragged, causing them hundreds of thousands of casualties, even after they poured in major reinforcements from India. The most fascinating fact was that even after the armistice had been signed in Europe, the colonel, unaware of the end of the war, was still on the attack. The British had to persuade him that the war was really over. It seemed like an irresistible story that had never been filmed and, further, one that could have contemporary meaning for the independence struggles in Africa.

For most of the next year we worked on the script we titled *The African General*, using the Dutch or Afrikaner "k" in the spelling of Africa. I drove to Paris, where Julian joined me, and from there we would go on to London for research. While in Paris, I was invited to a party at the home of James Jones, the novelist. I was uneasy about meeting him because my script for *The Thin Red Line* departed so completely from his book. But he was a prince, and while pressing drinks on me at the bar, he shrugged and said he was very happy with the film, for which he had been paid \$25,000. He had used the money to fix up a new guest bathroom in his apartment on the Île de la Cité in the very center of old Paris.

Julian and I worked for several weeks in London, using the friendly library system and finding books and maps at Foyle's bookshop. While in London in the fall of 1964, I assumed that the FBI, the CIA, and the American Embassy were watching me nervously. After all, research into the events of World War I in Africa might have all kinds of significance. London appears in the file pages again with a memo dated August 26, 1964 (111).

For the rest of 1964 and the first half of 1965, Julian and I worked on the story and script, alternating between Madrid, where I had family obligations, and Rome, where Julian also had domestic arrangements. I believe I spent more time in Italy on this occasion than ever before or after, and that may be when the legat at the American Embassy in Rome became interested in me. It was copied on a memo about me dated June 2, 1964, from Hoover to the CIA (100).

We finished a draft in June 1965 and were convinced we had a winner. We took it to London for a first-class mimeo job and a chance to show it to the film people we knew there. Most of the reaction was from good to enthusiastic. One old acquaintance who had produced some good films in Hollywood took the script to Richard Harris, who had just completed *The Heroes of Telemark* with Kirk Douglas. Harris loved the script and got in touch with Douglas, then starring in a film in Israel. This meant a trip to Israel for me to present our script to Douglas. But Douglas said he was already doing a film where he played a general and didn't want to do another one. No sale.

We were still confident that one way or another we would make a deal. Peter O'Toole, with whom we had a fine Chinese dinner, was interested. There was talk about an option. Leaving matters in the hands of our old agent, Mary Baker, who had moved to London, Julian returned to Rome, and I to Madrid.

No sooner did I arrive than Yordan came calling. He needed me. He had been working on a relationship with Cinerama for several years. Now it was coming to pass. William Forman had taken control of Cinerama and wanted Yordan to come up with product. Forman decided his first film should be about the great volcanic explosion of Krakatoa in 1883, the most violent eruption in history. Forman would come up with the money for a budget if Yordan would give him an acceptable story treatment.

Initially, my reaction was negative. "How do you build a story around a volcanic explosion? There's no warning or build up to the climactic event, so how can there be any personal story or drama about something that happens unexpectedly and instantly?"

Yordan didn't want to listen. He shook his head impatiently, but I continued. "It's something beyond human control and can't be anticipated. Unexpected destruction and disaster. How do you make a drama of that?"

Yordan was not interested in such clinical considerations. "Bernie, I can get four million dollars to make a picture. I'll come up with twenty-five thousand for you if you write a short treatment that Forman will approve."

This got my attention.

"But I need it right away. Like tomorrow. Just do it."

Pressured by Yordan, I turned out thirty pages of crude story in less than a week. Greedily, Yordan read it as always—with the pages an inch or two from his eyes because of his severe cataracts and a grin on his

face, which I had learned meant only that he was concentrating. Before he even looked away, he nodded happily. "Great. Just what I need." Then he paid me a dubious compliment. "Bernie, you're the best one I know at faking this kind of crap." Treatment in hand, he headed for California and Bill Forman.

This started two more years of work on the payroll (Cinerama budgets this time), writing *Krakatoa* and *Custer of the West*. In February 1966, while struggling with the script problems of *Krakatoa*, which I still found insurmountable, my energy and drive were about gone. With his usual good timing, Yordan announced he was taking me on a trip to the States, my first trip back since leaving in 1960.

In New York, Yordan and I lived in Forman's hotel suite in the Navarro on 59th Street, facing Central Park. Then we flew with Forman to California, where I was able to visit with old friends I hadn't seen since leaving five years before. Then it was back to Madrid and the grueling grind on *Krakatoa*. Yordan, again, kept me going by sending for Julian, who returned from Rome and worked with me on the script.

Because of delays in getting a script ready for *Krakatoa*, and also because it was increasingly apparent that the cost of a major special effects film would be much greater than had been planned, Forman instructed us to go with a film about Custer first. For me, George Armstrong Custer was almost as bad. I complained that he was just an Indian killer who deserved what he got. Who wanted to make a hero of him? Yordan could not have cared less. Forman of Cinerama wanted him presented as a hero. There would be money for a budget. We would all be paid. Go. *Custer* was made, but we never reached an agreement on *Krakatoa*.

At the end of 1966, Forman took *Krakatoa* out of our hands. A new director was brought in; Yordan remained nominally a producer. To my surprise, I was awarded coscreenplay credit by the Writers Guild when the film was eventually completed. But back in Madrid, Julian and I were fired. It was time for Jean and me to pack up and return to America. Julian returned to his home in Rome. Ellen had already enrolled at the University of California at Davis. The FBI notes our new connection with the university on a stray second page of some memo (192). Under "LEAD," "SAN FRANCISCO," "AT DAVIS, CALIFORNIA" is the directive to "discretely ascertain through established sources at University of California at Davis [two lines BLACKED OUT]." Now they are following my eighteen-year-old daughter who has matriculated at Davis and mentioning that they have established sources there. Where will they stop? Will they check her grades? And who she voted for class

president? And if she was in the employ of the KGB? One of the advantages of the return is that we would all be together in California again.

In 1964 and 1965, if the FBI indeed followed me on my considerable travels, the evidence is blacked out or was sent along on blank pages. But they and their friends at the CIA and the embassies were certainly busy building their file on me.

In June 1964 I had been watching the sad demise of the Bronston empire, the entire studio emptied of everyone who could be legally fired. I was also aware that my last contract with Yordan would soon expire and that the golden days in Spain would probably become a distant memory. But Hoover sent a multipage letter, all but entirely blacked out, to his friend Angleton at the CIA, presumably asking him to continue keeping an eye on me (100-102).

In August, a new development. The Washington Field Office promises to “review Military Attache Security Section, USA, files re [BLACKED OUT] and make recommendations as to whether or not he should be interviewed” (112). This clearly refers to someone else because the one thing that is not regularly blacked out is my name. Who could this be, and why the ominous “Military Attache”? Of course, it is well known that the military attachés in embassies are fronts for “intelligence.” It would be amusing to think that since I had been working on *Battle of the Bulge*, the bureau had concluded that I was either involved with the military or was spying on them.

On October 30, 1964, Baltimore, another city I have never seen, was added to list of file recipients (113).

I must hand it to the FBI agents who worked my file: they were indefatigable. In September 1965, while I was working away on *African General*, they were delving into events of 1943, trying to connect me with the “League of American Writers” (127). I don’t believe I ever belonged to that organization, nor was I even remotely a writer at that time, so they were probably confusing me with someone else with a similar name. That may also explain the spurious New Haven connection (127-129). Everything connecting me to the League of American Writers is wrong.

After file page 140, there are about forty more pages recording attempts by the FBI to press informants in Madrid to identify Jean and me from passport photos and to seek information about our social life. A few pages seem particularly interesting.

Someone “identified [BLACKED OUT] as the Gordons with whom he was acquainted in Madrid. After viewing a photograph of

[BLACKED OUT, but certainly of Jean] did not identify her from the photograph,” “could not recognize her although he saw her on one occasion” (140 -141). I’d love to know who “he” was. The fact that they had informants even among our social acquaintances in Madrid seems so nasty.

On the next page of the same letter or memo: “She recalled seeing Gordon working in the portion of Samuel Bronston Studios Annex utilized by [BLACKED OUT] of Security Pictures, the [BLACKED OUT] for the movie ‘The-55-Days of Peking.’” Now it’s a “she.” No sex discrimination regarding informants. At least this confirms that they knew I was working in Madrid for Security Pictures on *Peking*. Would this satisfy them that I wasn’t busy spying or committing treason? No. However, she certainly had one thing wrong. I never worked in the annex. I only held forth in the main building in an office across the hall from Bronston or in the Hilton hotel. Delighted to know that “she” describes us “as a very pleasant and likeable couple” (143). What else would you expect from traitors? Also nice to have it confirmed that I was involved with *Battle of the Bulge*.

In a letterhead memorandum (LHM) dated April 13, 1966, I am labeled a “suspect in this case” (156). What case? Suspected of what? The report seems to find something suspicious about my renting an apartment in Paris; there are all kinds of blacked-out references to an unnamed third party. On the last sentence of the page, a mention of what they are after: “intelligence activities of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.” I would love to query the people in the FBI about just what kind of intelligence information was ever available to me.

I have included the next page (167) to remind the reader what kind of information is made available under the Freedom of Information Act.

A memo dated July 7, 1966, mentions enclosing copies of five items (234). Only one is not blacked out: “Copy of an envelope postmarked May, 1966, at Los Angeles, California, address [*sic*] to Mr. BERNARD GORDON, bearing return address of [BLACKED OUT] Los Angeles 48, California.” So while I was in Spain, the FBI was rifling through my mail, making copies of envelopes and who knows what else. This reminds me that the Spaniards were obviously clued in to me because I actually received a letter addressed only to Bernard Gordon, Madrid, Spain. Talk about star treatment.

The feds tried to check on me through Diners Club: I actually had such a card (243). Really kind of disgusting. More interestingly, the name of Leonard B. Boudin, a liberal attorney who did much work for

blacklisted victims of HUAC, appears in the memo. However, I never met him or had anything to do with him. Why Boudin?

Even before we returned to the United States, the FBI was planning to follow Ellen at college. A memo dated July 27, 1966, contains handwritten instructions to contact “sources at U of C, Davis, Calif.” (244). A week later, a message goes from the San Francisco office to Hoover via registered air mail concerning “Records of the Registrar’s Office,” no doubt at Davis (247). Too much of this page is blacked out to make any sense of it, but there is a mention of “Brown and Altshuler.” James Brown was a close friend and attorney who occasionally did some minor business for me, like checking a rental lease. The bureau guys aren’t missing a beat.

One long report (at least twelve pages) from 1966 provides some legible text (171-172). First, the Los Angeles office had advised since 1963 that “no information concerning suspect GORDON had been received from informants of the Communist Party (CP)” since June 1959 and that no other sources had revealed evidence of such activities while I was living abroad. For efforts like cleverly adducing this highly secret information, the FBI justifies itself: “investigative efforts rightfully were expended to determine suspect GORDON’s activities in the U.S. prior to his departure for Europe in 1960. We were particularly interested in his activities from December, 1950, until his 1960 departure when he was residing in the Los Angeles area.” And just what of any value did they find out during these ten years of unremitting “investigative efforts”? And why are they suddenly trying to justify the great expense of this fool’s errand? From all this effort, any intelligence officer with the least amount of intelligence should have been able to see that GORDON never knew anything that could be of any value to anyone, much less to any enemy of the United States.

But they go on and discuss a plan to interview me and “her”—Jean, no doubt—on our return to the U.S. It is a comment on the timid bureaucracy of the bureau that no one had the honesty, the courage, or even the common sense to say to someone in authority: “We’ve been following this guy for years, and it is apparent he has no knowledge of anything meaningful, and has had no contact with anyone like an enemy, so why go on? Why not drop this fruitless pursuit?”

That finishes for now the exciting and unrelenting chase of BERNARD GORDON across Europe. It must be apparent to all how much the FBI’s years of effort disclosed about my secret activities.

What we need to search for and find, what we need to hone and perfect into a magnificent, shining thing, is a new kind of politics. Not the politics of governance, but the politics of resistance. The politics of opposition. The politics of forcing accountability. The politics of slowing things down. The politics of joining hands across the world and preventing certain destruction. In the present circumstances, I'd say the only thing worth globalizing is dissent. It's India's best export.

ARUNDHATI ROY, *The Nation*, FEBRUARY 18, 2002

20. Filed Away

Early in 1967, Jean and I left Spain. With our Irish setter, Chica, and our car, we took an overnight ferry from Barcelona to Genoa. From there, we drove down to Rome to visit with Julian and his wife before embarking at Naples for the crossing to New York. From there we drove down to Philadelphia to visit my ailing father, then continued to Florida for a few days with my sister and her family. Whether all this traveling aroused any suspicion in the FBI, I don't know. From Miami we set out across the United States on a journey that, geographically, was reminiscent of my first drive across the country in 1940. But this time we were driving a nice Mercedes I had picked up in Spain, staying in decent hotels, and nurturing our beloved setter, who was made comfortable on the back seat.

From New Orleans we headed north on a route that would take us to Northern California and Davis, where Ellen was attending the university. We had no notion at the time that the FBI had preceded us there and made inquiries about the family even before she had arrived at the school.

The next three years in California were busy ones for me and for the FBI. First, Jean and I rented a modest house in the flats of Beverly Hills for the summer so that we would have time to look for a house to buy. Our own place on Curson Avenue had been sold during our long stay in Europe. An interesting note: On August 15, 1966, an FBI agent noted that this house had recently been painted (184). It had been rented to several families while we were in Europe, and the FBI specially mentions that one of the families was Negro. Did that further incriminate me in un-American activities?

After many weeks of the usual agony of looking for a place to buy, we lucked out and found a place we could afford in the hills above the Sunset Strip. It had a great view, clear to the sea and beyond. As they liked to say, "on a clear day you could see Catalina," the island more than twenty miles off the coast. Situated up a virtually rural lane that gave us great privacy, and yet only a couple of blocks above the strip, it was a place we would fix up, furnish, and love. The FBI, as will be noted, did not take long to find me at this new address.

By October 20, 1967, the bureau had my new address on Shoreham Drive plus the temporary residence on Rexford Drive in Beverly Hills (202). The same short letter mentions my "agent in Paris." I never had

one there; my agent lived in London. Paris, London, what's the difference, really? And the FBI still can't seem to decide if I am "presently in Los Angeles," in spite of all the addresses listed.

As I had anticipated, it was not easy for me to find employment in Hollywood, where I was now unknown and had no contacts. Even before moving into 8729 Shoreham Drive, I set to work writing an original story with a good friend, Arnaud d'Usseau, who had also been working for Yordan for a number of years in Europe.

A letter dated November 6, 1967, mentions arranging an interview "promptly" (204). We moved into our new home in September 1967. On November 27, the FBI came visiting. From our windows we could see anyone coming up our driveway and walking to our steps. The two men in suits and snap-brim hats were unmistakable. I pointed them out to Jean and joked, "Should I tell them we bought this lovely place with Moscow gold?"

"You'd better just keep quiet and don't talk to them at all," Jean warned me.

At the door, the two men identified themselves as agents from the FBI. Actually, they did glance inside and remark, "Very nice place you have here." I wanted to turn to Jean and smirk, but she had made herself scarce.

"May we come in?" Very polite.

But I stood in their way at the door. "What do you want?"

"Just a few questions."

I didn't budge. "Go ahead."

"It would be better if we could come in. Any reason why not?" I had been warned many times, as had we all, that it was a serious mistake to enter into an interview with the FBI. No telling what they would choose to make of it. But I felt relaxed, even cocky. It was years since I had left the Communist Party. Why were they still after me? I had been productively at work in Europe, and I was very curious to learn what they knew about my work and my stay abroad. How closely had they followed me around Europe? Of course, at the time I had no notion of the extent of my FBI file. Maybe I could learn more from them than they from me. What harm could it do? I let them in.

We sat at an occasional table in the living room, and I continued to try to interview them. I was as polite with them as they were with me. "What do you want to know about me that you don't already know?"

"We'd like to talk to you about some of the people you knew over there."

I waited. They got right to the point. "Vladimir Pozner. You knew him?"

I was really surprised. "Pozner, the novelist and screenwriter?" A man I really didn't know.

They nodded. "I knew about him when he was here in Hollywood. But I never met him." This was true. Pozner, born, I think, in France, had had an impressive career, but he had traveled in the "A" list of the left wing, I had not. But they persisted.

"Did you know him in France?"

I might well have met him in some social event for the lefty refugees from Hollywood, but nothing more.

"I am willing to talk to you about myself, but not about anyone else." They mentioned the names of other people, some I knew. Some I didn't. They persisted. They particularly kept asking about Vladimir Pozner. I had met many expatriate left-wing Hollywood people in Paris, but that was all I would (or could) say.

When they found themselves up against a stone wall, their demeanor changed. "Look. You really should be more cooperative. You know you may be guilty of treason."

Treason? That got my attention. It seemed so ludicrous. Were these two a pair of bumblers? Still, of course, it made me wary and angry, and I demanded that they leave. They backed down and said they hadn't really meant treason, but I felt I had gone far enough, if not too far, with them. I insisted that they leave. To their protestations, I said that I would not talk to them any more except in the presence of my attorney. "Who is your attorney?" they asked. "I will not discuss anyone or anything with you. I am asking you to leave." They finally did.

Not wasting any time, they wrote up their report on the interview that same day (213). Note that I was given one redacted page of a seven-page report. Their account concludes that I responded "as a typical communist might be expected to respond . . . unfriendly, curt and seemingly disturbed that FBI Agents would interrupt [my] work." All this is, of course, valuable new information to justify the expensive four or five hundred pages of files.

When I did talk to my attorney, a well-known left-wing man who had raised hell with HUAC when he himself was called to testify, he bawled me out for foolishly having any truck with the investigators.

With this behind me, I continued work with Arnaud on our spec story. The story had occurred to me because after so many years away in Europe and out of touch with American television, I had been struck

forcefully by the unremitting push to sell anything and everything to a public glued to the TV set. It seemed to us that the day had arrived when even a president of the United States could be sold to a walle-eyed people who now bought everything from toothpaste and flashlight batteries to refrigerators and automobiles from television ads. Using the jargon of the day, we called our story *How to Become President of the United States, Dad*.

By a great stroke of luck, we ran into Walter Matthau in our agent's office. Matthau knew Arnaud from the days when Arnaud and Dorothy Parker had collaborated on a play, *Ladies of the Corridor*, in which Matthau had had his first starring role on Broadway. Matthau read our story, liked it, and arranged to have a production company pay us \$150,000 to write the screenplay.

We happily collected the first \$75,000 and went to work on the screenplay. But Matthau backed out of the deal, and we were not able to collect the other half. Once again, a good idea I had worked on was not made into a film, though some years later a very successful film with a similar premise, *Being There*, was made with Peter Sellers.

Arnaud and I wrote a couple more stories and scripts but had no luck. Yordan returned from Spain, having connected with some money people in England. Together with them, he had bought a property outside of Madrid that could be developed into a small film studio. The plan was to turn out spaghetti Westerns and other low-budget features. Yordan wanted me to return to Spain and run the studio. I couldn't wait. Yordan was confident that unlike the Bronston outfit, this would be a practical, cost-conscious operation turning out surefire product for television and the international market. I would enjoy the cost benefits of working in Spain and could reasonably be expected to survive indefinitely. He wanted me to plan a life there. I was more than happy to, but Jean was heartbroken to leave the home we had so lovingly put together in West Hollywood. In retrospect, I believe I was insensitive to how painful this move was for Jean. But I had reason to think that my prospects in Hollywood were dim, that the golden years in Spain would come again, that running even a small studio would be a most gratifying conclusion to a life beset by blacklisting and political persecution. I even entertained thoughts of a future in which bossing a studio might make it possible, one day, for me to produce the kind of meaningful films I had dreamed of as a kid in college. With all these enticing thoughts, I took off, first-class on TWA, leaving Jean to conclude the sale of our home,

ship the furniture to storage, and follow, first-class on TWA, with our Irish setter.

This was in September 1970. Although there are many more pages in my FOIA file, almost all of them thoroughly blacked out, the last page (287), dated November 25, 1970, runs thus: The letterhead or caption merely says “UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, *MEMORANDUM*,” and the text starts: “This memorandum recommends closing this investigation.” Then, after two blacked-out paragraphs, there is this: “*ACTION*: Case is being closed subject, of course, to being reopened in the event additional pertinent information is received.”

So far as I knew, the FILE was definitively closed.

It would have been tidy to conclude this twenty-six-year saga with the final words of the file, as I intended. But then I remembered:

Back in Madrid and actually in charge of our studio in Daganzo, a suburb twenty minutes outside the city, I was busy preparing the production of *Horror Express* in late 1971. I was at home in our apartment when there was a knock at the door. This time, I had no way of seeing who was calling. Opening the door into the hallway, I saw a man, a Spaniard, who identified himself as some kind of official. He said that he had come to check on the legitimacy of my lease on the apartment. This was obviously a clumsy lie, and the man, clearly uncomfortable dealing with a foreigner, seemed at a loss when I angrily refused to admit him to the apartment. This was certainly an instance of an intelligence mission. I told him there was nothing for him to check. My passport was in order; the apartment lease had been properly arranged by the studio attorney; and he had no business annoying me. If he had any questions, he could talk to the attorney, whose identity he certainly must know. Although certainly not fluent by then, my Spanish, from my having dealt with a Spanish film crew, was good enough to deal with this joker. For whatever reason, I did succeed in discouraging him, and he left.

The next day I reported this event to Herminio, the police lieutenant on the studio payroll. Herminio’s connection to film production went back to the earliest Bronston days, and had continued when we opened shop in Daganzo. He was always available to smooth the way for any business that required official approval, like importing and using guns for Western shoot-outs, and he was always present at the airport to usher us quickly through immigration and customs, no questions asked.

Whether this was for important matters like bringing in expensive film and sound equipment, or just returning with arms full of salami, pastrami, and bagels from a New York deli for homesick Americans, Herminio always managed for us. I never asked when he had time for his regular police duties or how much the studio paid him. This was left to the Spaniards to arrange. Nor did I ask or want to know what he had done as a cop working for the Franco regime.

In any case, without being a toady, he was always polite, deferential, and accommodating to the Americans who paid him and especially to me, now that I was the boss of the studio. He listened to my account of the encounter with the Spaniard who I assumed was a cop. Herminio's reaction was a surprise. For the first time ever he displayed some anger, saying, "The goddam CIA, always telling us what to do, thinking they can tell us . . ." He trailed off. Then, resuming his normal demeanor, he advised me, like a friendly uncle, "But you shouldn't be so rough when you deal with our police."

Nothing more came of this, but I think I can believe Herminio that the orders came from the CIA. They were still around.

For those who are curious about what became of me after the FBI signed off, I did get to be in charge of the studio outside of Madrid because Yordan left Spain for London, where he could be more useful promoting deals. I got to produce only two films written by my friends Arnaud d'Usseau and Julian. These were *Pancho Villa*, a comic take on the only military "invasion" of the United States; it was, at least, appreciated in London. And *Horror Express*, a science-fiction film that has become a cult classic for aficionados of the genre. But Yordan's surefire program misfired. Westerns became a drag on the market and couldn't be given away. Our switch to science fiction would have worked except that all the London financing had by then disappeared. In 1973 we returned to California and bought another home in the Hollywood hills, only blocks away from Shoreham Drive.

Because of money Yordan owed me, I obtained the rights to a package of films, many my own, that Yordan had been distributing on television. The arrival of videotape made these modestly lucrative, and I continued to survive comfortably without any Moscow gold.

Please remember that I cannot be dismissed as having earned merely 287 pages in the file shelves of the FBI. There are more than 202 other pages that they admit withholding, and who knows how many more have been destroyed?

What was the cost of all this? In *Dangerous Dossiers* (Donald I. Fine, 1988), Herbert Mitgang compiled the responses of prominent persons when confronted with the contents of their FBI files. I would like to quote John Kenneth Galbraith, “writer, economist and professor,” who described his dossier as an “unparalleled mine of misinformation” that proves “the Government of the United States has, in these matters, a colossal capacity for wasting money.” In a conversation with Mitgang, Galbraith said that “his FBI file alone cost the American taxpayer hundreds of thousands of dollars.”

We feel that it is unjust that a man who really did some very notorious and negative things, that his name is on that building. It's an insult. It's a disgrace.

MARTIN LUTHER KING III, ON AUGUST 28, 2002,
THE 39TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE "I HAVE A DREAM" SPEECH,
TO REPORTERS ACROSS FROM THE J. EDGAR HOOVER BUILDING.

Postscript

Anyone who reads these pages may think, understandably, that despite all my protestations of innocence, the FBI must surely have had something on me to account for all the years, time, and money spent hounding me. It can't be that it was all because I was just another Jew Communist . . . though come to think of it, that would have been two strikes against me with J. Edgar Hoover.

But consider the fact that over two hundred seventy-eight (and still counting) Hollywood writers, actors, directors, and producers were followed with equally unremitting diligence.

If you think I was an exceptional threat to the country, how about the following list of other "threats" compiled in *Dangerous Dossiers* by Herbert Mitgang (Donald I. Fine, 1988). From the table of contents:

E. B. White
Sinclair Lewis
Pearl S. Buck
William Faulkner
Earnest Hemingway
John Steinbeck
Thomas Mann
Carl Sandburg
Theodore Dreiser
John Dos Passos
Thomas Wolfe
Dorothy Parker
John O'Hara
Nelson Algren
Dashiell Hammett
Irwin Shaw
Truman Capote
A. J. Liebling
Thornton Wilder
Robert Sherwood
Elmer Rice
Maxwell Anderson
William Saroyan

Lillian Hellman
Tennessee Williams
Archibald MacLeish
Robert Lowell
Robert Frost
W. H. Auden
H. L. Mencken
Edmund Wilson
Stephen Spender
Graham Greene
Hannah Arendt
Aldous Huxley
Ignazio Silone
Alfred A. Knopf
Rex Stout
John Kenneth Galbraith
William H. (Bill) Mauldin
Norman Mailer
Allen Ginsberg
Alexander Calder
Ben Shahn
Georgia O'Keefe
Henry Moore

This puts me in pretty fine company, maybe something to be proud of. But that list only gives a selection of cultural figures. There are other categories. For example, the file on Albert Einstein runs 1,427 pages. He was followed until his death at age 76. Hoover closed that file a few days later.

But there's no way even to scratch the surface. A short while ago, I called a pleasant sounding lady, Ms. Linda Colton, of FBI public relations (honest). I told her that I was doing research for a project for the University of Texas, and I asked if she could give me a total number of all FBI files, or more particularly the number of files starting with 100, "threat to domestic security." Ms. Colton said she had no idea, that "I've heard it said the total would reach to the top of the Washington monument or even from here to the moon."

I answered, "Either of those figures would be fine if they're official." After some very polite resistance, she agreed to look into the matter and

said she would telephone me if she succeeded. Several days later, to my surprise, she did call. (Public relations!) She said the figure she had learned was 575,000 linear feet. But she didn't understand what that meant.

I answered, "I suppose that can only mean that the files stacked side by side in the usual way would occupy that many feet of shelf space."

She tried to digest this, and I continued, "That means that since there are 5,280 feet in one mile, it adds up to more than 100 miles of shelves." There was a kind of inarticulate murmur of agreement. I thanked her, and we hung up. Though I had trouble in school with differential calculus, my elementary arithmetic isn't bad. I calculated that that many feet times twelve equaled about six and a half million inches. As a reasonable guess, the average thickness of a file may be some two inches. That gives us almost three and a half million files. Whether these all start with 100, Ms. Colton couldn't say, nor can I. But give or take a million, that gives me something to think about these days when the media and some in the Congress are pounding away at the fact that despite all kinds of clues, the FBI (and the CIA) failed to come up with any information that might have led to the apprehension of the men in flight training who went on to commit the horror of September 11, 2001.

I keep listening to all the questions of the media, reading the speculation in the press, and hearing the excuses offered by the administration and the FBI. Absolutely nothing has been said about the fact that our intelligence agencies have spent most of their time in assiduous pursuit of people like Albert Einstein and me. When will we demand that they spend their billions of dollars and millions of hours pursuing perpetrators of crime and true threats to our safety rather than political dissidents? Is it possible that books like this will help move our investigative agencies from the job of blackmailing those who are critical of our imperfect democracy to apprehending those who are out to destroy us?

In a recent issue of *Vanity Fair*, Gore Vidal, speaking of the FBI in his usual blistering style, writes, "Plainly, the time has come to replace this vast, inept, and largely unacceptable secret police with a more modest and more efficient bureau to be called 'the United States Bureau of Investigation.'"

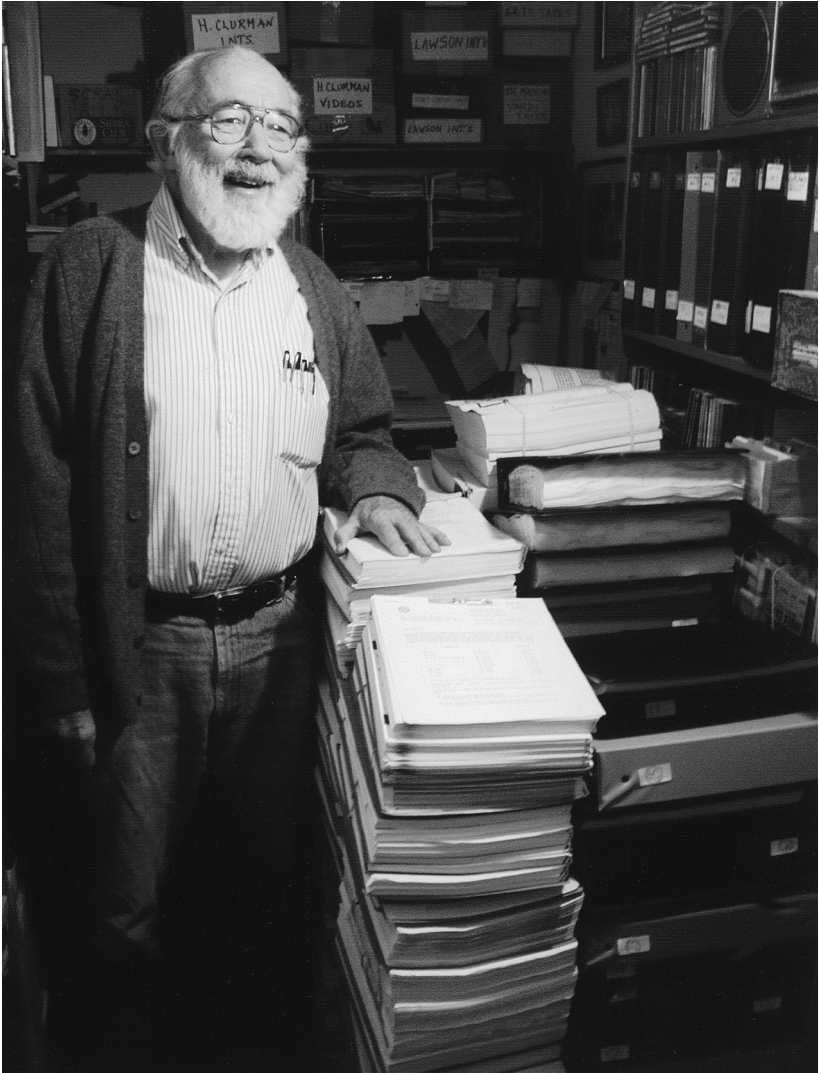
If you don't have a slot among those miles of files, perhaps you haven't been doing your job of telling the country and the world what's wrong with it and trying to make it a little better.

If anyone is offended by my occasionally flip and sardonic reflec-

tions on the serious matter of the existence of police-state elements here in America, let me quote Galbraith again: "Of course what the FBI did has to be treated as a danger to freedom, but they do deserve a large amount of ridicule" (Mitgang, 244).

It fascinates me that the same concept of farce and tragedy comes down the ages from James Madison, one of our nation's founders, to Galbraith, one of today's revered intellectuals.

And what of the FBI today? Will a free people ever be free to know what still goes on inside that grand fortress, that tribute to a malign influence exerted even from the grave, the J. Edgar Hoover Building?



2003. Robert Hethmon, professor emeritus at UCLA and historian of the blacklist, standing beside the FBI files of 278 Hollywood writers, actors, directors, and producers. He claims that his beard grew wild while he was waiting for delivery of the files. Photograph by Fred Haines.



1913. My mother (seated, left) with my father (in the narrow tie) beside her. They met at Orchard Beach, Connecticut, and married the following year.



1922. Exterior of my father's hardware store at Seventh Avenue and 30th Street, Manhattan. Except for freshening up, the window dressing didn't change for twenty years.



1923. Interior of the hardware store. My father with a Hitler mustache, apparently then in vogue. No political implications.



1923. Me, age five, with my sister and mother. I hated the Little Lord Fauntleroy suit and was a troublemaker in kindergarten. I did not yet have an FBI file, but later on the bureau got one thing right: I had brown eyes.

Fridays
At 8:15 P.M.

PAULINE
EDWARDS
THEATRE

23rd Street at Lexington Avenue



Film Appreciation Series

FILM and SPROCKETS SOCIETY

ART DEPARTMENT OF CITY COLLEGE

MEMBERSHIP

ENTIRE SERIES \$1.00
SINGLE PROGRAM .50
FOR STUDENTS .35

No Tickets at Door

- March 19 Primitive and Epic
QUEEN ELIZABETH—Sarah Bernhardt
INTOLERANCE (D. W. Griffith)
- April 9 Developing Technique
THE COVERED WAGON (Cruze)
THE LAST LAUGH—Emil Jannings
- April 16 Realism
THE LOVE OF JEANNE NEY (G.W. Pabst)
- April 30 Russian
TURK SIB (Turin)
STORM OVER ASIA (Pudovkin)
- May 14 Experimental
THE SEASHELL AND THE CLERGYMAN
THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

REMITTANCES TO CITY COLLEGE ART DEPT., 139 ST. & CONVENT AVE.

Tickets Gotham Book Mart
also at 51 West 47th Street

Columbia Book Store
2960 Broadway

Workers Book Shop
50 East 13th Street

*At City College of New York, Julian and I started the Film and Sprockets Society.
Here is one of our handbills advertising screenings.*



August 1939. Me (and dog) on Nantucket Island. Returning to the mainland a few days later, on September 1, we heard on the ship's radio Prime Minister Chamberlain declare war on Germany.

1948. Jean and I with our infant daughter, Ellen, six months after I was fired by Paramount Pictures for having been labeled a "Communist sympathizer" by a "friendly" witness at the 1947 HUAC hearings in Washington.

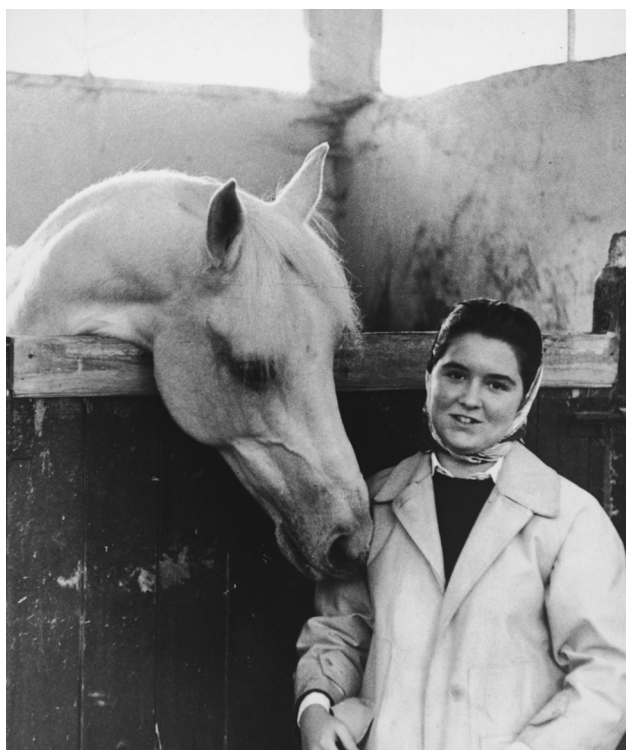




1951. Julian Zimet and me seeking work in Europe while the blacklist impended. At the Café de la Paix in Paris, Julian poses as Jean-Paul Sartre (left) and I act care-free in a trench coat (right).



1944. A hayride picnic for Hollywood Canteen volunteers. Left to right: Director Mervyn Leroy, Bette Davis, Jean Gordon (my wife), and another woman volunteer.



1960.
*Director Steve Sekely and I in a Madrid hotel room to discuss script work on **The Day of the Triffids.***

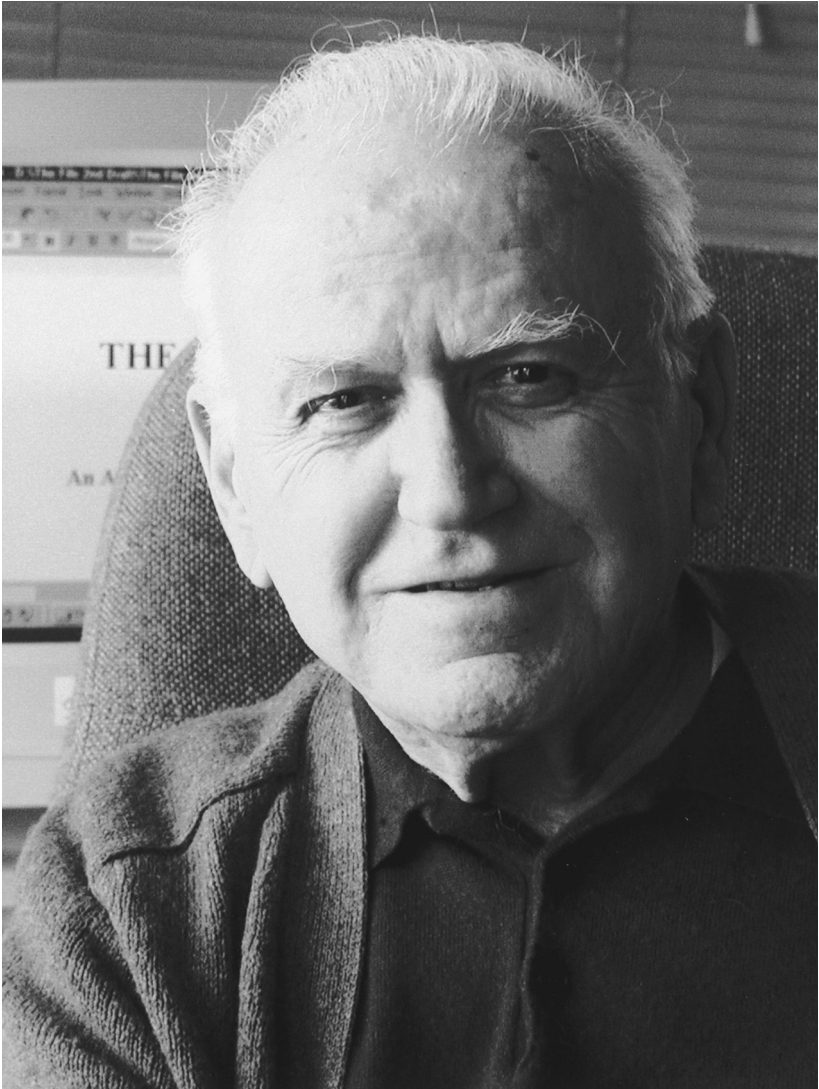
1963.
Ellen with her beloved Spanish Arabian horse in a Madrid stable.



1966. Ellen receiving her high school diploma at the American School in Madrid.



1971. Jean with Telly Savalas at dinner in a Madrid restaurant during the filming of Pancho Villa.



The author.

Appendix A
Selected Pages from
the Gordon File

2

NY 100-68472

It is to be noted that the last above address is apparently his present address.

It was further noted from this file that GORDON was born on October 29, 1918, at New Britain, Connecticut, and that his father's name was WILLIAM H. GORDON.

The Questionnaire was filed on March 24, 1941, and filled out in Los Angeles. From this Questionnaire, the following information was taken:

Education - 8 Years elementary, 4 years high school, CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK 5 years, B.S. Degree, and postgraduate in education.

Employment - He is a reader; that is he reads books and plays, etc., and makes a synopsis for motion picture production; 6 months experience.

Employers - Paramount Studios, Twentieth Century Fox.

Occupational Experience - Production Assistant 1938 - 1939 (pictures); production documentary films 1939 - 1940.

Marital Status - Single.

Dependents - None.

Citizenship - Born New Britain, Connecticut, October 29, 1918.

Criminal Record - No convictions of treason or felony.

The subject stated that he should be classified IV because of family history of tuberculosis; that his mother died of pulmonary T.B. at the Rockland County Sanitarium, New York, in October of 1939, and further that he was rejected by the New York Civil Service Commission because of a heart murmur.

The following are the various classifications:

Classified June 24, 1941, 4-F; July 12, 1942, 1-A; rejected by the Armed Services April 2, 1943, 4-F.

The above last classification was based apparently on a finding of a valvular heart disease.

NY 100-68472

The Occupational Questionnaire as contained in this file reflects previously reported information with the addition that he has Social Security No. 560-26-3461 and that the address of his employer is Paramount Pictures, Inc., 5451 Marathon Street, Hollywood, California.

A review of the Physical Examination Sheet reflected some additional descriptive data as to his physical condition; that is that he has astigmatism as well as the previously reported disorders.

The Form 42-A was filed on October 30, 1943, by [redacted] and reflected that the subject is employed as a reader with this organization and listed the subject's prior work experience as follows:

From September, 1938, to January, 1939, he was Production Assistant for American Documentary Films, Inc., and from February of 1939 to April of 1939 he worked on a documentary film for I.L.G.W.U. From May of 1939 to August of 1939 he was a producer of commercial fashion films for Merchandising Film Corporation. From September of 1940 to April of 1941 he was a free lance writer in Hollywood. From April of 1941 to August of 1941 he was a reader at Republic Studios. From August, 1941, to date he was employed by Paramount Pictures, Inc.

The indices of the New York Field Division reflect that a BERNARD GORDON, residing at 7726 66th Drive, Middle Village, New York, signed the 1943 New York City Nominating Petition for the Communist Party, and again BERNARD GORDON, residing at 3315 Hull Avenue in Bronx, New York, signed the 1942 New York City Communist Party Nominating Petition. It is pointed out that none of these addresses have appeared in any information on the subject.

The following description of the subject was secured from his Selective Service File:

Color	White
Sex	Male
Height	5'10"
Weight	130 lbs.
Eyes	Brown
Hair	Brown
Complexion	Light
Peculiarities	Wears glasses (astigmatism); scar on chin
Social Security No.	560-26-3461
Born	October 29, 1918, New Britain, Connecticut

- REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN -

CHAD. 10

5

LA 100-22493

b7D, b2

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on [redacted]

Los Angeles, on April 19, 1946. SA [redacted] observed an automobile registered to BERNARD GORDON, 107 South Swetzer, Los Angeles, parked adjacent to this meeting place on April 19, 1946.

b2

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on May 17, 1946 that [redacted] Hollywood would hold a meeting which would be attended by [redacted] the National Negro Congress on May 12, 1946. SA [redacted] observed the occupant of a car registered to BERNARD GORDON enter the [redacted] home on the evening of this reception.

b7c

The National Negro Congress has been cited by the Attorney General as being within the purview of Executive Order 9835.

b2, b7D

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on [redacted] that the [redacted] of the Los Angeles County Communist Party had been held on [redacted]. An auto bearing California license (7 C 4382, registered to BERNARD GORDON, was observed in the vicinity [redacted] by SA [redacted] on October 13, 1946.

A public announcement circular of the winter term of the People's Educational Center, 1717 North Vine Street, Hollywood, California, states that the term will begin January 19, 1948 and that BERNARD GORDON will teach a course entitled "Screen Writing - II."

The Los Angeles Educational Association, also known as the People's Educational Center, has been cited by the Attorney General of the United States as being within the purview of Executive Order 9835.

b2

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on January 18, 1949 that BERNARD GORDON was in contact with [redacted] regarding some story writing work.

b7c

b2

[redacted] advised that [redacted] Los Angeles [redacted]

On [redacted] GORDON [redacted] advised that in his opinion BERNARD GORDON was a Communist.

b2
b7D

On December 5, 1949, [redacted] advised that his definition of a Communist is that anyone who is a member of the Communist Party of the United States is

100-335648 ✓

October 28, 1948

SAC, Los Angeles

RE: BERNARD W. GORDON
SECURITY MATTER - C
Your file 100-22493

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/17/97 BY 60372/MS/STMS

b7c

Dear Sir:

A review of the files at the Bureau in connection with this subject has revealed that a report has not been received from your office concerning the subject since the report of Special Agent dated 1-6-45 at Los Angeles [redacted]

While it is realized that existing instructions do not require that a report be submitted periodically on Security Index card subjects unless the subject is also a top functionary, it is felt that in view of the tense international situation at the present time, a new report should be submitted setting forth the extent of the subject's present activities in connection with the Communist Party and related groups in order that the Bureau will be in possession of current information concerning each one of those subjects who are considered a threat to the internal security.

In submitting the report, the Bureau desires that you incorporate in summary form the information contained in your files not previously reported. Information of substantive nature only should be set forth and repetitious material should be avoided. Where a description of the subject has not been reported, that, too, should be included in the report and also placed on the reverse side of the Security Index card in accordance with the instructions outlined in SAC Letter No. 57, Series 1948, dated April 10, 1948.

In the event the subject's current address is not the same as that which appears on the Security Index card, you should correct the Security Index card and forward Form FD-119 to the Bureau in order that the Security Index card at the Bureau can be corrected.

In order that the Security Index will contain only the names of those individuals who can be considered to be a threat to the internal security of this country, the Bureau desires that you carefully appraise this case and if it appears that the subject based on his present position and activities or past position and activities cannot be considered such a threat, then in addition to submitting the report, you should recommend that the Security Index card be canceled.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
OCT 28 1948 P.M.
This matter should receive your immediate attention.
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

LGD:mo

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Gurnea
- Mr. Harbo
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Pennington
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Tele. Room
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

NOV 2 1948

HR:ZM

12

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

NOT RECORDED
Special Agent in Charge
100-335048

February 10, 1945

Los Angeles, California

RE: SECURITY MATTER

Dear Sir:

Please be advised that a security index card has been prepared at the Bureau, captioned as follows:

CORDON, BERNARD W.

NATIVE BORN

COMMUNIST

107 So. Sweet,er
Los Angeles, Calif. (Res.)

Paramount Studios
Hollywood, Calif. (Bus.)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/17/79 BY 60262MS/BJE/TMS

The above caption should be checked immediately for accuracy against the information contained in your files, and the Bureau should be informed of any discrepancies. You will prepare without delay a 5" x 8" white card captioned as above and reflecting your investigative case file number for filing in your Confidential Security Index Card File. In the event the above caption is not correct, the card you prepare should be correctly captioned, and the Bureau should be informed of the correct caption.

The caption of the card prepared and filed in your Office must be kept current at all times and the Bureau immediately advised of any changes made therein in that connection.

- Tolson
- E. A. Tamm
- Clegg
- Coffey
- Glavin
- Ladd
- Nichols
- Rosen
- Tracy
- Mohr
- Carson
- Hendon
- Sumford
- Jones
- Quinn Tamm
- Nease
- Gandy

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
 MAILED 5
 FEB 10 1945 P.M.
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Very truly yours,

J. E. Hoover

John Edgar Hoover
Director

Handwritten signatures and initials: E. A. Tamm, J. E. Hoover, and others.

79 FEB 14 1945 / 76

1/10/50

13

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI
FROM : SAC, Los Angeles
SUBJECT: BERNARD W. GORDON
SECURITY MATTER - C

DATE: January 10, 1950

b7c Cancel 15-1

CANCELLED

FEB 8 13 1950

Rerep of Special Agent [redacted] dated January 10, 1950 at Los Angeles, California.

It is recommended that the Security Index card presently maintained for the subject be cancelled as GORDON is presently unemployed and informants do not report current activity on his part with the Communist Party.

TPC:kla
100-22493

RECORDED - 31
EX-97

100-335645-6
JAN 17 1950

Field advised
2-7-50
lul

STAT. SECT.

52 FEB 9 1950

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/17/99 BY 6032NLS/BUE/BMS

74
b7c

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **LOS ANGELES** FILE NO. **100-22493**

REPORT MADE AT LOS ANGELES	DATE WHEN MADE 1/10/50	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 10/31; 11/8-10/28; 12/3, 5, 7/49	REPORT MADE BY [REDACTED]	KLA
TITLE BERNARD WILLIS GORDON AGENCY OSI DIST OFF 4			CHARACTER OF CASE SECURITY MATTER - C	
AGENCY REG. REC'D. REPT. FORW. BY				

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

Subject presently resides at 11947 Albers Avenue, North Hollywood, California, and is presently unemployed, being represented by the WILLIAM MORRIS Employment Agency, 202 North Canon Drive, Beverly Hills. Confidential informants have advised that subject has been active in affairs of the Los Angeles County Communist Party and Los Angeles County Communist Political Association since 1942 and in 1943, an informant advised that GORDON was a member of the Los Angeles County Communist Party. In December, 1949, an informant advised that he believes that GORDON is in favor of the Communist Party being in control of the United States.

REFERENCE:

Bureau File 100-335648.

DETAILS: RESIDENCE AND EMPLOYMENT

By pretext telephone call on December 7, 1949, it was determined that BERNARD GORDON is presently residing at 11947 Albers Avenue, North Hollywood, California.

[REDACTED] of known reliability, advised on December 5, 1949 that BERNARD GORDON is presently unemployed, is a writer, and was last employed at Columbia Pictures.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/7/99 BY 60262NLS/BCE/TMS

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: [Signature]	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES		RECORDED - 50
COPIES OF THIS REPORT		335648-1		INDEXED - 50
⑥ - Bureau	COPIES DESTROYED	LBI		EX-52
3 - Los Angeles	JAN 13 1969	JAN 17 1950		
	JAN 13 1950	STAT		
		SEE		

ADD. DISSEMINATION

b7D,
b2

15

LA 100-22493

PERSONAL HISTORY

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on November 29, 1949 that BERNARD GORDON was last employed at Columbia Pictures from August 13, 1948 until May of 1949 and that his address during this period of employment was 6231 1/2 de Longpre, Hollywood, California.

b2,
b7D

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on November 29, 1949 that BERNARD GORDON, 1438 North Gower, Hollywood, California, a writer, Social Security Number 560-26-3461; born October 29, 1918 in New Britain, Connecticut, an American citizen, was employed by the Columbia Picture Corporation from August 3, 1948 to November 27, 1948; from December 17, 1948 until January 10, 1949; and from April 22, 1949 until May 21, 1949.

The records of the Paramount Picture Corporation, Hollywood, California, reflect that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON was employed in the Story Department from August 28, 1941 to February 21, 1948; that GORDON was born October 29, 1918, and his last known address was 6231 1/2 de Longpre Avenue, Hollywood, California.

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b7D

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on November 29, 1949 that BERNARD GORDON was employed by the R.K.O. Picture Corporation for a short period of time, but he does not know the dates of this employment.

ACTIVITIES

[redacted] of known reliability, advised on September 15, 1942 that BERNARD GORDON of Paramount was a subscriber to a plan to run advertising in the local newspapers demanding a second front in the war, [redacted]

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[redacted] of known reliability, advised in January, 1945, that [redacted] was a member of the Los Angeles County Communist Political Association.

b2
b7C

The Los Angeles County Communist Political Association is on a list of organizations cited by the Attorney General as being within the purview of Executive Order 9835.

On June 30, 1943, SA [redacted] observed an automobile with California license 9 T 4063, parked in the area of the [redacted] Los Angeles, and at the same time observed a man driving this car enter the home [redacted]. This car was registered to BERNARD GORDON, 107 South Sweetzer Street, Los Angeles, California.

b7C,
b2,
b7D,

[redacted] advised on [redacted]

(P)

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LA 100-22493

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b7D

In November, 1945, [redacted] advised that [redacted] a musician, was a member of the Los Angeles County Communist Party.

The Communist Party, U.S.A., is on a list of organizations cited by the Attorney General as being within the purview of Executive Order 9835.

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[redacted] of known reliability, advised on July 22, 1943 that BERNARD GORDON was a member of Branch L, Northwest Section of the Los Angeles County Communist Party.

BERNARD GORDON was observed by SA [redacted] to enter the home of [redacted] Los Angeles, who, according to [redacted] Branch D, Northwest Section, Los Angeles County Communist Party. This occurred on the evening of July 6, 1944, after [redacted] advised on July 5, 1944, that a meeting was to be held at this address on July 6, 1944.

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[redacted] advised on July 7, 1944 that [redacted] told BERNARD GORDON of a meeting to be held on July 8, 1944 at [redacted] to discuss what to do about retaining control of the funds of the Hollywood Canteen for use by the Writers' Guild in a post war development of the Guild.

b2
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[redacted] advised on [redacted] that [redacted] advised him on that day that [redacted]

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[redacted] advised on July 11, 1949 that BERNARD GORDON had been seen in conversation with [redacted] who was assisting [redacted] with work at the Northwest Section of the Los Angeles County Communist Party offices.

b2

[redacted] on November 2, 1945, advised that [redacted] was a member of the [redacted] of the Communist Political Association.

b7C

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[redacted] of known reliability, advised on August 2, 1944 that BERNARD GORDON, 107 South Swetzer, Los Angeles, holder of 1944 Communist Political Association Card Number 44239, was a member of Club H (Sunset Club) of the Los Angeles County Communist Political Association.

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BERNARD GORDON, who was described by [redacted] on August 31, 1944 as Labor Chairman of Branch H, Northwest Section, Los Angeles County Communist Political Association, Communist Political Association Membership Card Number 44239, was, according to [redacted] of known reliability, a leader in the Council of Hollywood Guild Unions, as well as a leader in the Screen Analysts Guild.

b2

b2

[redacted] advised on July 18, 1945 that BERNIE GORDON was in attendance at meetings held on July 7 and July 9, 1945, which had been arranged by [redacted] [redacted] the Northwest Section of the Los Angeles County Communist Party.

b7C

LA 100-22493

a Communist and although he has no definite information that GORDON is a member of the Communist Party, he has concluded in his own mind from the actions of GORDON, that GORDON was attending meetings of some organization, the name of which GORDON would not state, and which [redacted] believes was a [redacted] at this time, further advised that GORDON.

[redacted]

stated that without direct reference to the name of the Communist Party, [redacted] GORDON that [redacted]

[redacted] advised that GORDON [redacted]

[redacted] mind, there is no question but that GORDON would be in favor of whatever means would be proposed by the Communist Party to secure control of the United States Government.

[redacted] also stated that GORDON. [redacted] stated that [redacted]

[redacted] advised [redacted]

The Daily People's World is a West Coast Communist newspaper.

- C L O S E D -

ix

7

18

LA 100-22493

ADMINISTRATIVE PAGE

Investigation at the Screen Writers' Guild, the WILLIAM MORRIS Agency, R.K.O. Pictures Corporation and the Columbia Picture Corporation was conducted by SA [REDACTED] on November 28 and 29, 1949.

b7c

Investigation at Paramount Pictures was conducted by SA [REDACTED] on November 30, 1949.

(B)

(B)

(B)

19

LA 100-22493

INFORMANT PAGE

b2, b7D

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b2, b7D

b2, b7D

b2, b7D

[REDACTED] North Hollywood, California

[REDACTED] Hollywood, California

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SA [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SA [REDACTED] b7C

[REDACTED] Anonymous.

[REDACTED] on [REDACTED] b7C

[REDACTED] on [REDACTED] SE [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] SA [REDACTED] California

Office Memorandum • SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT 21

TO : Director, FBI (100-335648) DATE: March 6, 1953
FROM : SAC, Los Angeles (100-22493)
SUBJECT: BERNARD WILLIS GORDON
SECURITY MATTER - C
Origin: Los Angeles

b7c

Re Los Angeles let to Bureau dated 2/9/53 captioned "Compic, IS-C"; and report of SA [redacted] Los Angeles, dated 1/10/50.

By relet the Bureau was advised that the subject was issued a subpoena by the HCUA calling for his appearance before the Committee in Los Angeles, California, for the week of 3/23/53. The subject had been subpoenaed to appear before the HCUA in Los Angeles in September, 1952, but was not called to testify at that time.

A review of the subject's file fails to reflect any substantial activities on the part of the subject in the CP or Communist dominated organizations subsequent to refrep. The subject was formerly on the security index of the Los Angeles Office, but his security index card was cancelled as requested in Los Angeles let to Bureau dated 1/10/50. No information concerning the subject has been developed to justify placing the subject on the security index.

This case will be maintained in a closed status. The subject's testimony before the Committee will be closely followed and in the event he is a "friendly witness" consideration will be given to requesting Bureau permission to interview the subject.

CLOSED.

EWA:DJD
Reg.

RECORDED - 7 100-335648-9

SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED BY 60267NLS/BCET/MS
ON 2/17/99

53 MAR 17 1953

23

Refer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The following is set out concerning GORDON's past activities:

An informant advised in 1944, that GORDON was then employed in the Story Department, Paramount Studios, Hollywood, California. At this time, he was Labor Chairman, Branch H, Northwest Section, Los Angeles County Communist Party. Informant described GORDON, at that time as one of the most enthusiastic Communists in Hollywood. When the Communist Party changed to the Communist Political Association late in 1944, GORDON remained a member of the new organization. In December, 1944, he continued in the position of Labor Chairman, Club H.

In 1949, it was reported by an informant of unknown reliability who had been [REDACTED] with GORDON, that GORDON was openly pro-Communist in his statements, [REDACTED] while the United States Army was controlled by capitalists. On one occasion, GORDON remarked [REDACTED]

In 1950, GORDON was reported traveling in Mexico and later returned to Los Angeles, following which he departed for Paris, France. At this time, he was reported to be making efforts to produce a motion picture in West Germany.

Another informant advised that in 1953, GORDON was a member of the Civil Rights Congress, an organization designated

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b7D

24

by the Attorney General of the United States pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

In November, [REDACTED] an informant who was [REDACTED] GORDON, advised that while he had no specific information concerning Communist Party membership on the part of GORDON, he, nevertheless, considers GORDON to be pro-Communist and pro-Russia. Informant observed GORDON is intelligent and capable and would do anything in his power to further the Communist cause.

b7D
b7C

In 1954, 1955 and 1956, GORDON was a subscriber to the "Daily People's World", a West Coast Communist newspaper.

In 1955, GORDON was a dues paying member of the Southern California Arts, Sciences and Professions Council, and, on [REDACTED] he attended [REDACTED]

A characterization of the Southern California Arts, Sciences and Professions Council is attached.

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: March 3, 1959

~~SECRET~~

FROM : *enub* Legat, London (100-1724)

SUBJECT: BERNARD WILLIS GORDON
SM - C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Re Los Angeles memorandum dated 12/24/58.

Information contained in referenced memorandum was
furnished [redacted]

[redacted] and should any information
come to his attention regarding him this office will be advised.

As there are no further leads outstanding this case is
being placed in an RUC status

RUC

EX-140

REC-4

100-335712-11

- 5 - Bureau (2-Los Angeles 100-22493)
- 1 - Paris, sent direct (for info)
- 1 - London

2 MAR 10 1959

ACM:ic
(7)

BOUCH WVT

CONTROL

CLASSIFIED BY 2026TNS/BC/MS

DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 6

2/17/99

~~SECRET~~

57 MAR 13 1959

2d

3/12/59
2cc to LA.
for info
w/vp/...

b1

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

5-1
(7-23-54)

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

SECRET

TO: Legal Attache, ~~XXXX~~ London (Your file 100-1724) DATE: 2/26/59
FROM: Director, FBI (Bufile and serial 100-335648 ser 10)

SUBJECT: Bernard Willis Gordon Office of Origin: Los Angeles
SM-C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

1. () The deadline in this case has passed and the Bureau has not received a report. You are instructed to submit a report immediately. In the event a report has been submitted, you should make a notation of the date on which it was submitted on this letter and return it to the Bureau, Room No. 1200

Report submitted 3/3/59

Report will be submitted

Reason for delay Information received from Bureau 1/15/59.
Bureau stated no investigation requested but sources should be alerted

~~REDACTED~~ Matter referred to Bureau by letter dated 3/3/59.

Post
File
bl

2. ~~XXXX~~ Advise Bureau re status of this case.

3. ~~XXXX~~ Advise Bureau when report may be expected.

CLASSIFIED BY 60267NLS/BCE/TMS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 6
2/17/99

4. () Surep immediately.

(Place your reply on this form and return to the Bureau. Note on the top serial in the case file the receipt and acknowledgment of this communication.)

4 MAR 1959

5-21P

Am

SECRET

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1953-O-577906



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

28

~~SECRET~~

American Embassy
Paris 8, France

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Date: March 10, 1959

To: Director, FBI

From: Legal Attache, Paris (100-823)

Subject: BERNARD WILLIS GORDON
SM - C

Re Los Angeles letterhead memorandum 12/24/58,
and 0-1 2/26/59.



RUC

b

- 3 - Bureau (1 Los Angeles 100-22493)
 - 1 - Paris
- WFD:AM
(4)

2-d

~~ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 11/12 BY 60321/s/bc/etms~~

EX-132

REC-9

MAR 18 1 58 PM '59

BOUCII WYIF

14 MAR 16 1959

53 MAR 20 1959

CLASSIFIED BY 2036 TMS/BCE/TMS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 6
2/7/99

335617-1
SUBMITTED
~~SECRET~~

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

30

TO : Director, FBI
FROM : Legat, London (100-1724)
SUBJECT: BERNARD WILLIS GORDON
SM - C
OO: Los Angeles

DATE: August 11, 1959

SECRET
CONFIDENTIAL

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

4-1

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

RUC.

CC TO: JWS - LIA
REQ. REC'D 3-29-61
APR 11 1961
ANS.
BY: RHM - [initials]

- 6 - Bureau (Encls. 6)
(3--Los Angeles - 100-22493)
- 1 - London

ACM: mas
(7)

CLASSIFIED BY 60267NLS/AM/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X b
2/17/79

EX-126

100-335648-13
REC-43
AUG 14 1959

Copy to [initials]
by routing slip for
 info action
by [initials]

ENCLOSURE

Copy to [initials]
by routing slip for
 info action
date [initials]
by [initials]

CONFIDENTIAL
SECRET

ELBY CONTROL

58 AUG 25 1959

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

31



United States Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation

~~SECRET~~

Washington, D. C.
August 11, 1959

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

aka Re: BERNARD WILLIS GORDON

*Gordon

x Gordon

[REDACTED]

b1

[REDACTED]

b1

So - do we include any
we sent following you to Jean
note the cases?

CLASSIFIED BY 60261NLS/act/ms
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 6
2/7/99

100-335148-13
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

32 b7c

SAC, WFO [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~ b1

1 [redacted]
10-24-62

Director, FBI [redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

ReWFOlet 10-9-62.

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY 60227MS/BSP/RS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 4/24/99

75
5000

100-335647-
NOT RECORDED
98 OCT 25 1962
1- [redacted]
①- 100-335648 (B/Gordon)
EIT:cgw (7)

~~SECRET~~

ORIGINAL FILED IN

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

1 - [redacted] 33
1 - Liaison.

(E) [redacted] (S) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE
BY LIAISON

Date: October 18, 1962

To: Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Mr. James Angleton

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [redacted] (S)

Per CIA
(J)(1)
(b)(3)

DECLASSIFIED BY [redacted]
DATE [redacted]

[redacted] (S)

Enclosed is a copy of a memorandum pertaining to Bernard Willis Gordon who is [redacted] (S)
Subsequent to the preparation of that memorandum [redacted] (S)
[redacted] attaches in London and Paris advised that contacts [redacted] (S)
[redacted] have failed to develop any derogatory information concerning subject, his [redacted] (S)

b7c
b1

[redacted]

[redacted]

Refer

- 1 - WFO
 - 1 - Los Angeles
 - 1 - New York
 - 1 - London, Paris Excluded from automatic Bern, Madrid, downgrading and Rome by sep. declassification cover
- 100-335648 (100-335648, B.W. Gordon)

100-335648-
NOT RECORDED
133 OCT 19 1962

~~SECRET~~
Group 1

EIT:cgw
(14)

SEE NOTE PAGE 2

~~SECRET~~

34

Director
Central Intelligence Agency ~~TOP SECRET~~
(4)

1962

[REDACTED]

b7C

[REDACTED]

We are asking our representatives in the countries referred to above to check [REDACTED] for information concerning the subject. We would appreciate any information in your files concerning these individuals and any information which may subsequently come to your attention either while they are abroad or after their return to this country.

b7D

b7C

Enc.

[REDACTED]

b1

~~SECRET~~
SECRET

LA. 100-22493

37

From February, 1939 to April, 1939 the subject was a producer of commercial fashion films in New York City, following which he returned to the City College in New York to take a post graduate course. In June of 1940 the subject came from New York to Los Angeles and worked out here in Los Angeles as a free lance writer until April, 1941, at which time he went to work at Republic Studios as a reader. Following his employment at Republic Studios, subject went to Paramount in August, 1941, where he was employed first as a reader and has recently been promoted to the Story Department. In this connection it should be pointed out that the [redacted]

[redacted] who according to [redacted] was a member of the Communist Party and is a member of the Communist Political Association. It was ascertained that the subject is registered with LDB #85 at the Bronx, New York and has Order #1399. It is believed the subject is classified A-F.

CITIZENSHIP: Subject is a citizen of the United States inasmuch as he was born in this country.

SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES: [redacted] advised this office that the subject was a member of the Communist Party and that he had been elected to the position of Labor Chairman of Branch H of the North West Section of the Los Angeles County Communist Party. This same source stated that following the dissolution of the Communist Party and the organization of the Communist Political Association, the subject continued as a member of the C.P.A.

[redacted] stated that the subject was formerly the president of the Screen Readers Guild and that he was chairman of the Negotiations Committee for new contracts for the screen readers. It was noted that an article in "Variety" Hollywood trade publication, stated the subject had resigned his position as president of the Screen Readers Guild when he was promoted to the Story Dept.

It has been ascertained that the subject is very active in various Hollywood labor activities. It is known that he is a member of the motion picture labor committee for political action and was at one time the representative from the Screen Readers Guild. The subject was also the spokesman for the Screen Readers Guild at the conference of Hollywood studio unions, which organizations have liably been reported as dominated by members of the Communist Political Association.

[redacted] stated in this connection that he considered the subject one of the most enthusiastic Communists in Hollywood and pointed out through his connections in labor activities and through his influence as a member of the Story Department of Paramount Studios, the subject was in a key position to agitate the Communist Political Association's beliefs.

23

FILED IN 100-22493

38

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

b7c

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

LOS ANGELES

FILE NO. 100-22493

REPORT MADE AT LOS ANGELES	DATE WHEN MADE 11/6/44	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 8/21, 23, 24; 9/16/44	REPORT MADE BY [REDACTED] MFM
TITLE BERNARD W. GORDON		CHARACTER OF CASE SECURITY MATTER - C	

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

Subject resides L.A.; is employed in story dept. Paramount Studios, and is graduate from City College, N.Y., film editor in NYC, one time free lance writer and former reader at Republic and Paramount Studios. Citizen. Subject labor chairman of Branch H, N.N. Section (motion picture industry). Subject prominent in Hollywood labor activities. Identified at Communist Party and C.P.A. meetings; associated with Communist Party functionaries and members.

CC TO [REDACTED]
REQ. RE [REDACTED]
MAY 21 1960

DETAILS:

NAME: BERNARD W. GORDON

RESIDENCE: 107 So. Sweetzer, Los Angeles, California - phone WY 7538.

BUSINESS ADDRESS: Paramount Studios, Hollywood, California.

EMPLOYMENT: Subject is employed in the Story Department, Paramount Studios, the function of which is to select stories for motion pictures.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: [REDACTED] advised that the subject was employed by the Paramount Studios formerly as a reader and presently as one of the heads of the Story Department.

Special Agent [REDACTED] contacted [REDACTED] subject was born October 29, 1918 at New York City, and that he was graduated from City College in New York in June, 1938; following which he worked as a Production Assistant for the American Documentary Films, Incorporated.

APPROVED AND FORWARDED:

SPECIAL AGENT

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

COPY DESTROYED

JAN 13 1960

COPIES OF THIS REPORT

- 5 - Bureau
- 2 - New York
- 1 - SID, Los Angeles
- 1 - ZIO, Los Angeles
- 3 - Los Angeles

COPIES IN FILE

100-22493-335648-1

b2, b7D

RECORDED
INDEXED

74 DEC 13 1945

b7D

b7c

b7c

b7c

40

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1 DATE: 7/12/62

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S) (RUC) b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

(OO: New York)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Re New York letter to Director 6/6/62.

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED]

CLASSIFIED BY 3122/2/10/2015

9/17/80

- 2 - Bureau (REGISTERED) (S) b1/
 - 2 - New York [REDACTED] (Encs. - 4) (REGISTERED) b1
 - ? 1 - Boston [REDACTED] (REGISTERED) (Info.)
 - 1 - Washington Field [REDACTED] (REGISTERED) (Info.)
 - 1 - Los Angeles [REDACTED] (S)
- HHW:nlb
(7)

REC-3

JUL 13 10 25 AM '62

REC-59

[REDACTED] (S)

ESP. DIV.

53 JUL 24 1962

X

b7c

b1

22

41

b1

X

LA

[REDACTED] (S)

BERNARD WILLIS GORDON
Los Angeles file 100-22493
Bureau file 100-335648

Reference is made to Los Angeles letter to Director dated 12/24/58, and Legat, London letter dated 8/11/59.

BERNARD GORDON was born 10/29/18, at New Britain, Connecticut (age 33 in 1951). His father, WILLIAM HENRY GORDON, was born in 1894, at Melitopal, Russia, and mother, HENRIETTA DORMAN, was born 1894 at Liverpool, England. His father was naturalized on 2/21/44 at Southern District of New York.

b7c

[REDACTED] was born [REDACTED] at Morgantown, West Virginia. GORDON graduated from City College of New York in June, 1938. He worked as Production Assistant for American Documentary Films, Inc. at New York City from 1938-39; Merchandise Film Corporation, New York City, 5/39 - 8/39; and post graduate work City College of New York, 9/39 - 6/40. He was a free lance writer in Hollywood 9/40 - 4/41; a "reader" at Republic Studios 4/41 - 8/41; and writer at Paramount Studios 8/41 - 9/44. In 1944 he was reported as Labor Chairman of Branch H of the Los Angeles CP. He is described as white, male, American, 5'10"; 130; brown hair, brown eyes, wears glasses (astigmatism), has scar on chin. Los Angeles letter to Director (Bureau file 100-3-94), "CP - USA, District 13, Underground Operations," dated 9/9/50, reflects that GORDON was planning to go to France but was financially unable to handle the expense. GORDON's [REDACTED] was then in New York City en route to France, and [REDACTED] GORDON to [REDACTED]

b7c

pp0015

U. S. Passport No. 332245 was issued to BERNARD GORDON on 7/28/50. GORDON intended to leave New York City on 9/1/50 by Trans World Airlines for a three months pleasure trip to England, France and Italy.

42

LA [redacted] (S)

b1

SECRET

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

b1

During 1952 GORDON had returned to Hollywood and was employed at Warner Brothers Studio as a writer. He was then residing at 1232 North Gardner Avenue, Los Angeles.

GORDON was subpoenaed to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee on 3/23/53. He was dismissed from his employment at Warners Studios as result of his failure to advise his employer of this subpoena. From 1953 to 1955 he was connected with the Editorial Board of the "California Quarterly" at Los Angeles. In 1957 he resided at 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles.

GORDON applied for another passport at Los Angeles on 5/23/56 for a three months trip to England, France and Italy. His fee was returned to him and no passport issued when he refused to comply with the required noncommunist affidavit.

X

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

43

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED]

DATE: 7/25/62

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK [REDACTED]

CLASS. BY: [REDACTED]
REASON: [REDACTED]
DATE OF REVIEW: 7/26/92

SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

(OO:NY)

Re WFO let 5/22/62, Bulet 5/25/62, NYlet 6/6/62,
and LA let 7/12/62.

[REDACTED]

b1

[REDACTED]

b1

AND FIELD OFFICES
APPROVED BY ROUTING
SLIP(S) OF
DATE: 7-10-62

CLASSIFIED BY: 57023/abj/bst/ky
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/7/2000

- 2 - Bureau [REDACTED]
- 1 - Los Angeles [REDACTED]
- 2 - Washington Field [REDACTED]
- 1 - New York [REDACTED]

REC-38

(INFO)(RM) (Encls. 4)(RM)

DFL:caw
(6)

25 JUL 30 1962

EX-108

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

44

NY [redacted] c b1

CONFIDENTIAL

[redacted] (c)

[redacted] (c)

[redacted] (c)

[redacted] c

LEADS
REQUEST OF
BUREAU

[redacted] (c)

CONFIDENTIAL

45

NY

[REDACTED]

c

b1

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LOS ANGELES

At Los Angeles, California

[REDACTED]

b1

(c)

WASHINGTON FIELD

At Washington, D.C.

[REDACTED]

b1

(c)

NEW YORK

At New York, New York

[REDACTED]

b1

(c)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

46

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

X

b7c

On 7/16/58 GORDON was issued U. S. Passport No. 1005323 at Los Angeles. He planned to leave New York about August, 1958, for a three months pleasure trip to England, France and Italy. In 1958 [REDACTED]

On 7/25/60 the above passport was renewed at Los Angeles. GORDON planned to depart Los Angeles on 7/26/60 by Air France for five weeks in France doing research for a story.

As of October, 1960, he was residing at 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles.

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

X

b1

47

LA

[REDACTED] (S)

XIT

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

LEADS

NEW YORK

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

(2) Will advise Boston if any further investigation is desired at this time regarding ~~BERNARD WILLIS GORDON~~

(3) Will advise Los Angeles if any further investigation desired regarding BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

X

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

48

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1

DATE: 8/7/62

FROM : SAC, WFO [REDACTED] (S) (P) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 elw [REDACTED] b1
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X [REDACTED] 7/7/2000

ReBulet 5/25/62. NYlet 6/6/62, and LAlet 7/12/62.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 2-Bureau
- 1-Los Angeles [REDACTED] (Info) (AM) (RM)
- 2-New York [REDACTED] (RM)
- 1-WFO [REDACTED] (S)

AP:ktk
(6)

F229
51 AUG 17 1962

REC-15

12 AUG 7 1962

[REDACTED] b7c

49

b1

WFO

[REDACTED]

(S)

~~SECRET~~

during the time pertinent to this investigation.

Photographs of [REDACTED] were obtained from the Passport Office and will be retained at WFO in the event subsequent investigation indicates the photographs should be shown to the original source.

b7c



ReLAlet sets forth information concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON and it appears that this individual is a logical suspect in this investigation. It is noted that the time WFO reviewed passport record concerning this individual no photographs were retained for WFO's file.

WFO files contain no information identifiable with [REDACTED]

One copy of this communication is being furnished to the Los Angeles Office for information as they may be requested to conduct further inquiries concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

LEADS

NEW YORK DIVISION

AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Will forward to WFO photograph of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

Will exhibit photograph of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON to source when he becomes available after 8/18/62.

~~SECRET~~

b1

51

WFO [redacted] (S)

b1

with no logical suspects developed to date.



P. APPROX

1927

(S)

b1

b1

WFO

(S)

1/21

~~SECRET~~

52

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b7c

BERNARD GORDON, born 10/29/18, New Britain, Connecticut,
was issued passport #Z 144874 on 7/16/62, in Madrid, Spain.

~~SECRET~~ - 4 -

b1

1962 53

WFO [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~

Passport is to expire on 7/16/65. He indicated he traveled in France, Spain, England, Italy, and Switzerland from 8/4/60 to 7/16/62, arriving in Spain on June 26, 1962. He indicated he intends to return to the United States within two years. He listed his permanent residence as 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles, and other residences as 5 Rue Lerouz, Paris 16, France, and Hotel Castellana Hilton, Madrid, Spain. He indicated [redacted]

b7c

[redacted] He is described as being 5'9" tall, with gray hair and brown eyes. He listed his occupation as author.

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

b7c

[redacted] (S)

b1

X

54

WFO [redacted] (S)

b1

WFO is also checking with the Security Division, United States Department of State, for any pertinent information they may have concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

Extra copies of this communication are being furnished to Bureau in the event Bureau desires to furnish copies to Legats in countries where GORDON has traveled.

REQUEST OF THE BUREAU

WFO suggests the Bureau, through Legats, determine if the authorities in the foreign countries visited by GORDON have any pertinent information concerning BERNARD GORDON.

[redacted] (S) b1

b1 [redacted] (S)

LEADS

LOS ANGELES DIVISION

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Will contact established sources to determine the date and means of departure of [redacted]

[redacted] (S) b7c b1

Will give consideration to utilizing anonymous source techniques if the GORDONS are still out of the country, and consider obtaining proper authority to use such techniques to determine their contacts and nature of contacts.

Will consider giving [redacted] similar

b7c

55

WFO [redacted] (S)

b1

SIX

coverage [redacted] coverage on this individual might furnish some indication of the GORDONs activities in Europe.

Will check file and conduct investigation to determine if GORDON visited Mexico subsequent to his trip to Paris, France. [redacted] (S)

NEW YORK DIVISION

b1

AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

[redacted] (S)

b1

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

AT WASHINGTON, D.C.

b1

[redacted] (S)

Will report any information received from the Security Office, United States Department of State, concerning GORDON [redacted]

b7c

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] b7c

[redacted] (S)

b1

56

b1

Legal Attache, London

1 - [redacted]
10-18-62

b1

Director, FBI

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY 37063clw/bcl/ps
DATE 9/7/2008

Reference is made to LA letterhead memo dated 12-24-58 captioned "Bernard Willis Gordon" copies of which were furnished to the Legats in London, Paris and Rome on 1-8-59. Copies of this memo are enclosed for Legats in Madrid and Bern.

b1

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

For your additional background in this matter, enclosed for each Legat is a copy of WFO letter dated 10-9-62 in the captioned matter.

OCT 15

OCT 18 1 10 48 AM '62

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- DeLoach _____
- Evans _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

56 OCT 15

- 2 - Paris (Enc. 2)
- 2 - Bern (Enc. 3)
- 2 - Madrid (Enc. 3)
- 2 - Rome (Enc. 2)
- 1 - WFO [redacted] (S)
- 1 - Los Angeles [redacted] (S)
- 1 - New York [redacted] (S)
- 1 - Foreign Liaison Unit (Route thru for review)

ETT:cgw

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

b1
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b1
b1
b1
b1

-detached
[initials]

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

b1

SECRET

57

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

DATE: 10/29/62

F. J. [unclear]

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK [REDACTED] (S)

b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S)

b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

ReBulet to WFO, 9/26/62, and WFO let to Bureau,
10/9/62.

[REDACTED]

b1

NYO will review the records of City College of
NY, for any new pertinent information pertaining to the
subject or his associates while he attended that
school.

inc

CLASSIFIED BY 39063elw/BCS/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X

9/7/2000

REC-44

- 2-Bureau [REDACTED] (S) b1 (RM) (S) b1
- 1-Los Angeles [REDACTED] (RM)
- 1-Washington Field [REDACTED] (RM)
- 1-New York [REDACTED] (S) (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S)

13 NOV 2 1962

b1

AKH:bk
(5)

[REDACTED]

b7C

5 NOV 9 1962

SECRET

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104-01

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

58

TO : Director, FBI [redacted] (s) b1
FROM : Legat, London (100-1724)(RUC)

DATE: 11/27/62

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [redacted] (s) b1

Rebulet dated 10/18/62 requesting London to check
sources concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, [redacted]

[redacted] b1
[redacted] (c)
[redacted] b1

CLASSIFIED BY 390630/3/85/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: EOP 1.6
9/1/2000

- 2 - Bureau
 - 1 - Liaison Section (sent direct)
 - 1 - London
- JTM:rn
(4)

REC-30
(5)

[redacted] b1

9 NOV 28 1962

[redacted] b7c

Place cc in 100-335604
re B. Gordon

3 Nov 11-28-62
1962

DOM INLETT DIA
REC. 10

NOV 30 15 16 62 25

by [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

54 DEC 4 1962 37

X

Memorandum

b1 ~~SECRET~~

59

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 11/28/62

ok

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted] (S) (P)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

b1

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S)

b1

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 adl/ret/ris
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/7/2000

ReWFOlet 10/9/62.

The file review concerning the subject has been completed at WFO. No other suspects were obtained as a result of the file review.

[redacted]

b7C

The files of the Security Office, U. S. Department of State, did not contain any pertinent information re BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, [redacted]

b7C

The records of G-2, Fort Holabird, Maryland, checked on 10/10/62 through [redacted] Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Pentagon, contain no pertinent information concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

[redacted]

b7C

- 2 - Bureau (S) REC-6
- 1 - Los Angeles (RM)
- 1 - New York (RM)
- 1 - WFO (S)

AP:meh (5)

b1

DEC 2 1962

b1

60 DEC 6 1962

~~SECRET~~

REC-6

b7C

ALL INFORMATION
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

60

CLASSIFIED BY 57063ab/RS/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: OADR
9/11/2000

NOVEMBER 23, 1962

To: Director, FBI [redacted] (S) (S) bl
From: Legal Attaché, Madrid [redacted] (P.) bl
Subject: [redacted] (S)

ReBulet to Legat, London, 10-18-62.

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

- 7 - Bureau (1 - Liaison Section, 1 - Los Angeles, 1 - Newark, 1 - New York, 1 - Washington Field)
- 1 - Bern (sent direct) (Enc. 1)
- 1 - Paris
- 1 - Rome
- 1 - Madrid

SWP:HD
(11)

UNRECORDED COPY AND COPY OF ENCL. FILED IN

ESP [redacted]

b7c

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

61



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
November 23, 1962

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Re: BERNARD WILLIS ~~X~~GORDON

CLASSIFIED BY 3906zdw/3ce/ks
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 6
9/8/2000

Refer

[REDACTED]

X Gordon

GORDON identified his father as WILLIAM W. ~~X~~GORDON,
born 1894 in Russia, and his mother as HENRIETTA ~~X~~GORMAN, born
1892 in Russia. He informed that [REDACTED] born on
[REDACTED] at Morgantown, West Virginia. He stated
they were [REDACTED] He claimed to be an
author by profession.

b7c

[REDACTED]

b1

(c)

CONFIDENTIAL
~~Group 1~~
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

This document contains neither
recommendations nor conclusions of
the FBI. It is the property of
the FBI and is loaned to your agency;
it and its contents are not to be
distributed outside your agency

COPIES DESTROYED
369 JUN 19 1970

ENCLOSURE

[REDACTED]

(c)

b1

MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

ALL INFORMATION
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED
WHERE SHOWN

62

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S) bl
FROM : SAC, NEW YORK [redacted] (P*) bl
SUBJECT: [redacted] bl

DATE: 12/27/62

CLASSIFIED BY 30103ab/pct/fms
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
7/9/2000

ReNYlet to Bureau, 10/29, 62.

A review of the records of CCNY on 11/30/62 by IC [redacted] reflected no new pertinent information in BERNARD WILLIS GORDON's file since his last attendance in 1940. His file contains no information concerning any clubs which he might have belonged to or any outside activity which he may have participated in while attending school.

A review of [redacted] case file and references failed to reveal any additional information germane to this case.

It is noted that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON has been living in Europe for several years and has recently indicated he will not return to the U.S. for about 2 years.

2 - Bureau [redacted] (S) bl (RM)
1 - New York [redacted]

AKH:FGM
(3)

DEC 31 1962

REC-77

53 JAN 8 1963

b7c

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~Secret~~

63

TO : Director, FBI [redacted] (S) bl

DATE: 12-26-62

FROM : Legal Attaché, Madrid [redacted] (RUC) (S) bl

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S) bl

Re Madrid letter 11-23-62.

CLASSIFIED BY 39063eld/Bee/Hus
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/7
9/4/2000

[redacted] (S)

No further action is being taken in this matter
by Legat, Madrid.

- 7 - Bureau (1 - Liaison Section [redacted] (S) bl
- 1 - Los Angeles, [redacted] (S) bl
- 1 - Newark [redacted] (S) bl
- 1 - New York, [redacted] (S) bl
- 1 - Washington Field, [redacted] (S) bl

- 1 - Bern (sent direct)
- 1 - Paris (sent direct)
- 1 - Rome (sent direct)
- 1 - Madrid

SWP:HD
(11)

50 JAN 4 1963
160-

REC-32 (S)

10 DEC 31 1962

Copy to...
by routing slip for
 info action
date 1-4-63
by [signature]

[redacted] b7C

[redacted]

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Memorandum

SECRET b1 64

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

DATE: 1/3/68

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S) (P) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

OO: New York

CLASSIFIED BY 3906326/3CET/US
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/7/2000

Re Washington Field Office letter to Director dated 10/9/62.

Former [REDACTED] who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised as follows on 11/19/62.

Informant was [REDACTED] BERNARD WILLIS GORDON during the [REDACTED] Informant recalled that during the above period of time GORDON was [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] were then residing at 1232 North Gardner Avenue, Hollywood, California, a duplex unit.

Informant recalled that GORDON [REDACTED] as a screen writer as result of his "persecution" by the HCUA. GORDON was discouraged with his career and strongly objected to screen writing under an assumed name and the meager fees he was able to earn under these circumstances.

[REDACTED]

- 2 - Bureau (REGISTERED) (S) b1
- 2 - New York [REDACTED] (REGISTERED)
- 1 - WFO [REDACTED] (REGISTERED)
- 2 - Los Angeles (S)
- (1 - 100-22493) (BERNARD W. GORDON)

HHW:bmm
(7)

REC-18
EX-100
JAN 10 1968
b7c

56 JAN 10 1968

b1 X

b2, b7D

b1

~~SECRET~~

65

b1

LA [redacted] (S)

Informant recalls that during the period [redacted] in-
GORDON [redacted] formant recalls that GORDON [redacted]

[redacted] Informant [redacted]
[redacted] Informant recalls [redacted]
[redacted] (Los Angeles indices reflect no
references identifiable with the name [redacted])

b7C

In [redacted] this informant reported that in his opinion
GORDON [redacted]

b7D

Informant also recalls that GORDON during the period [redacted]

Informant [redacted] GORDON in the latter part of [redacted] Calif.
He recalls that [redacted] GORDON [redacted]
[redacted] Informant could not state that the GORDONS
currently live at Los Angeles. He vaguely recalls that he
has heard that GORDON [redacted]

[redacted]

Case 1-4

X

1962

b1

~~SECRET~~

66

LA [redacted] (S)

FBI Sp. Inv. File # [redacted]

b7c

[redacted]

BERNARD WILLIS GORDON on 7/16/62 was issued a renewed passport at U. S. Embassy, Madrid, Spain. He indicated that he had been travelling in France, Spain, England, Italy, and Switzerland since 8/4/60. He arrived in Spain on 6/26/62. He listed as his permanent residence 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles, California, and other residences as #5 Rue Leroux, Paris France, and Hotel Castellano Hilton in Madrid, Spain.

b7c

Los Angeles has determined from files relating to BERNARD [redacted] Hollywood, California, formerly [redacted]

On 11/28/62 Los Angeles ascertained that 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles, is listed as the residence of the Consulate General of the Dominican Republic and the personal residence of the Consul [redacted]. Telephone service to that address is listed to number [redacted].

A review of Los Angeles files reflect that in April, 1962, the Consulate General of the Dominican Republic was located at 5327 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles. On 5/16/62 it was determined that the official address of the Dominican Republic Consulate was then 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles. The residence of the Consul is also listed as 1253 North Curson Avenue. Los Angeles files reflect no other information indicating association between the Consul of the Dominican Republic and BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

A thorough review of Los Angeles file 100-22493 (BERNARD WILLIS GORDON) reflects no information concerning him has been received from informants cognizant of CP and related activities at Los Angeles since June, 1959. It is noted that GORDON was reported to have entered the United Kingdom from Calais, France, in June, 1959. In July, 1960, (X)

X

SECRET

1962

67

bl

LA [redacted] (S)

GORDON was at Los Angeles and departed by Air France en route to France. [redacted]

bl

From the above it is reasonable to presume that BERNARD WILLIS has not resided at Los Angeles since 1960 and has very probably maintained a residence at #5 Rue Leroux, Paris, France. [redacted]

b7c

A review of Los Angeles file [redacted] reflects [redacted] and currently resides at [redacted] Los Angeles. She was reliably reported as a member of the Communist Political Association (CPA) at Los Angeles in 1943 under the name [redacted]

No information is currently known as to the storage place of the property of BERNARD [redacted] therefore, no consideration is being given at this time to development of an anonymous source in this regard.

b7c

[Large redacted block]

(S)

SECRET

bl

68

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

b1

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

DATE: 1/8/63

FROM : *W* *WPS* SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S)

b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S)

b1

CLASSIFIED BY 392632/w/BSE/TJS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/16
7/19/2000

OO: New York

Re Los Angeles letter dated 1/3/63.

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

- 2-Bureau (RM)
- 2-New York (RM)
- 1-Los Angeles

(S)

REC-41

HHW:SAG
(5)

JAN 10 1963

6 JAN 20 1963

54 JAN 16 1963 F-60

REC-41 [REDACTED] b7c

69

b1

X

LA [redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

Investigation has also reflected that from 1952 to 1954 [redacted] was residing in Mexico City. As previously reported in referenced letter, Los Angeles informant has advised that between 1952 and 1954 BERNARD GORDON made several trips to Mexico City, Mexico.

b7c

b1

[redacted] (S)

Regarding BORIS GORDON, 9E96th Street, New York City, report of SA [redacted] New York, 7/23/45, captioned, [redacted] reflects that BORIS GORDON was born 7/24/1880 at Kharkof, Russia; naturalized in France in 1930. Prior to the Russian Revolution, this GORDON was reportedly a prominent industrialist in Russia. He came to the United States from France in November, 1942. BORIS GORDON [redacted]

b7c

b1

[redacted] (S)

New York may desire to search its indices for pertinent information regarding [redacted]

b7c

Referenced letter reflects that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, during 1952-1954, made trips from Los Angeles to Mexico City and was reportedly in contact with one [redacted] (ph), [redacted]

p. 70 ?

[redacted] (ph), [redacted]

b7c

X



~~SECRET~~

THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

70

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

The American Embassy
Rome, Italy

Date: February 19, 1963

To: Director, FBI [redacted]

From: Legat, Rome [redacted]

Subject: [redacted]

CLASSIFIED BY 3906306/205TAS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/9/2000

bl
(s) bl
(s) (RUC) bl

ReBulet 10/18/62 and Madrid let to Bureau 12/26/62.

[redacted]

[redacted]

No further action is being taken by Rome Office in this matter.

- ⑦ - Bureau (Encs. 10)
 - (1 - Foreign Liaison)
 - (1 - Los Angeles)
 - (1 - Newark)
 - (1 - New York)
 - (1 - WFO)
 - 1 - Legat, Bern (Enc. 1) (sent direct)
 - 1 - Legat, Paris (Enc. 1) (sent direct)
 - 1 - Legat, Madrid (Enc. 1) (sent direct)
 - 1 - Rome
- TJB:hcs
(11)

ENCLOSURE

Copy to [redacted] by routing slip for [redacted] into [redacted] date [redacted] by [redacted]

REC-5 EX-115

6 MAR 1963

~~SECRET~~

35

bl

bl

bl

b7c

71



SECRET
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

CONFIDENTIAL

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

February 19, 1963

BERNARD WILLIS GORDON

[REDACTED] (S)

b1 [REDACTED] (S)

(S) [REDACTED] b1

[REDACTED] (S) b1

SECRET

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

CLASSIFIED BY 3903/261/200/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/6

b1

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ENCLOSURE

[REDACTED]

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

72

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S) bl

DATE: 2/12/63

FROM: LEGAT, MEXICO CITY [redacted] (S) bl

(RUC)

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S) bl

Remylet 1/25/63. ? bl

[redacted] (S) bl

[redacted] (S) bl

CLASSIFIED BY 390326/RJS/RS
DECLASSIFY ON: ESK

9/9/2000

- 5 - Bureau
 - (1 - Liaison Section) [redacted] (S)
 - (2 - New York, [redacted])
 - 1 - Mexico City
- MDC:eim
(6)

Copy to [redacted] by routing slip for [redacted] action
2/12/63
[redacted]

bl

a

bl

REC-17

311
14 FEB 20 1963

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS
SEC. 10
EX-112
FEB 15 10 30 AM '63

[redacted] (S)
[redacted] b7c

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

b1 74

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 3/1/63

u g d

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted] (P) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S) b1

(OO:WFO)

CLASSIFIED BY 390630/BJE/ta
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/9/2000

ReWFOlet 1/31/63.

Enclosed for the Bureau is one photo of BERNARD
WILLIS GORDON to assist the Legat, London, [redacted]

B. d.

b1

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

*b7C
3/1/63
3/2/63
3/3/63
3/4/63
3/5/63
3/6/63
3/7/63
3/8/63
3/9/63
3/10/63
3/11/63*

[redacted] (S)

- 2 - Bureau (Info) (RM)
- 1 - Los Angeles (Info) (RM)
- 1 - New York (Info) (RM)
- 1 - WFO

REC-35
b1

AP:mfd
(5)

X. [signature]
1-ny, la, wfo
3/1/63
ETT

EX-117 b1

11 MAR 4 1963

ESP. SEC.

~~SECRET~~

75

WFO [redacted]

[redacted]

b7C

The Office of Security file re BEALE review by SA [redacted] of 2/20/63, failed to reflect any information indicating contact with FERNARD WILLIS GORDON

[redacted]

b7C

[redacted] Special Assignments Branch, Office of Security, Department of State, advised SA [redacted] on 2/27/63, that based on past experience any effort to locate communications in the Commercial Policy Division concerning contacts [redacted] would be a laborious task involving the review of voluminous files, as he is quite sure the Commercial Policy Division does not have any central index. [redacted] advised he will pursue the matter and if he develops any information of interest he will notify this office.

b1
b7C

[redacted]

b1

[redacted]

b7C

b1

76

WFO [redacted] (S)

b7c

[redacted]

b1

[redacted] (S)

REQUEST OF THE BUREAU

b7c

[redacted]

Copies of this communication are being furnished to the New York and Los Angeles Divisions as they have leads outstanding in this case.

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

1. Will report any pertinent information developed by the Department of State.

[redacted] (S)

b1

X
bl 1 77 '60

Legal Attache, London

3-28-63

REC-134
Director, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 08/01/01 BY 60322 UCBAW

bl

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] bl

CLASSIFIED BY SP3 BJS/BJG
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/9/2008

[REDACTED]

MAILED 10
COMM-FBI

bl

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- DeLoach _____
- Evans _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

bl

[REDACTED]

Enc. 3 FBI - Foreign Liaison Unit (route thru for rev

1 - New York [REDACTED] (S) bl

1092 Los Angeles [REDACTED] (S) bl

APRA

MAIL (8) TELETYPE UNIT

WAB
WAB

SEE NOTE PAGE 2

Mail Room

~~SECRET~~

78

Letter to Legal Attache, London

(S) [REDACTED]

b1

[REDACTED]

b1

b1

(S)

NOTE: The enclosed memo pertaining to Gordon dated 2-5-60 is a copy of serial 23 of 77-82322.

~~SECRET~~

79



~~SECRET~~ THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

American Embassy Paris 8, France

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Date: March 4, 1963

To: Director, FBI [redacted] (S)

From: Legal Attache, Paris [redacted] (P)

Subject: [redacted] (S) b1

Re Paris let 12/20/62.

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

4 - Bureau (1 - Liaison) (1 - WFO [redacted])

1 - Paris

REP:AM

(5)

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 elh/ast/bus
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/6
9/12/2000

EX-102

REC-45

DO NOT WRITE DIA
REC'D

La Paris 11 3 no 064 (esne) [redacted] (S)
1-2A, nys-WFO [redacted]
3-2863
ETO [redacted]

~~SECRET~~

b7c

b1

h7c
80

Legal Attache, Paris [redacted] (S) b1

REC-136
Director, FBI [redacted] (S) b1

1 [redacted]
3-28-63

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 1/1/83 BY [redacted]

(S) [redacted]

Re Paris letter 3-4-63, copies of which
are enclosed for NY, LA and WFO.

[redacted] b1

- 1 - Los Angeles (Enc.)
- 1 - New York (Enc.)
- 1 - WFO [redacted] (Enc.) b1

1 - Foreign Liaison Unit (route thru for review)

ETT:cgw
(8)

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 alw/BCE/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/1/6
9/14/2000

19 MAR 29 1963

50 APR 4 1963

TELETYPE UNIT

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- DeLoach _____
- Evans _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Ingram _____

COMM-FBI

REC'D FBI

ETT/MS

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

81

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1

DATE: April 2, 1963

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S) b1 (RUC)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

CLASSIFIED BY 3963als/pct/vjs
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/6
7/9/2000

OO: NEW YORK

Re Los Angeles letters to Director dated 1/3 and 8/63; WFO letter to Director dated 3/1/63:

A review of all references from the indices of the Los Angeles Office concerning persons with surname, [REDACTED] failed to reflect any pertinent information as pertains to contacts or associations with BERNARD WILLIS GORDON. b7C

During February, 1963, IC [REDACTED] ascertained that the 1947 telephone directory for Central area of Los Angeles fails to reflect a listing for BERNARD WILLIS GORDON. The Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company representative advised that the prefix SUnset was discontinued in early 1948 therefore the previous unlisted subscriber to telephone SUnset 1-9904 is unknown and there is no record index which could be used now to identify this former subscriber. b7C

[REDACTED] b1

Should Los Angeles receive any information reflecting that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON [REDACTED] have returned to the Los Angeles area the Bureau and New York Office will be advised. b7C b1

- 2 - Bureau (Registered)
 - 1 - Washington Field (Registered) APR 4 1963
 - 1 - New York [REDACTED] (Registered)
 - 1 - Los Angeles
- HHW:sn
(5)

53 APR 10 1963

ESP. [REDACTED] b7C

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104-01

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

87.

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] b1
FROM : LEGAT, LONDON (100-1724) (RUC)

DATE: April 23, 1963

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] b1

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 als/BCE/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
7/9/2000

Reurlet April 8, 1963, advising that [REDACTED] b7C
[REDACTED] would be interviewed upon his return to London.

On April 23, 1963, [REDACTED] b7C
In summary, he advised he recalled no one by the name of GORDON.
He did not recognize the photograph and could recall no individual with whom he has ever dealt by that name.

[REDACTED] b7C b7D
He was not given any information about his possible dealings with BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

[REDACTED]

- 3 - Bureau
 - 1 - Liaison Section (Sent Direct)
 - 1 - London
- CWB:ec
(5)

Working slip for
 info action
date 5-6-63
by [signature]

EX-120

38

8 APR 1963

[REDACTED]

X-137

b7C

83

[REDACTED]

advised he had

was exhibited a photograph of BERNARD GORDON. He stated as far as he could recall, he had never seen this individual and knew of no one by this name. He said it was possible that he could have met GORDON, as anyone in the movie business coming to the Department of State while he was there would probably have been referred to

[REDACTED]

informed that if any information came to his attention later that might be of assistance in identifying GORDON, he would immediately contact this office.

As there are no further leads pending in this matter, it is being placed in an RUC status.

6-5
SEARCHED
SERIALIZED

b7C
b7D

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

84

ALL INFORMATION ON
THIS DOCUMENT IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 5/8/63

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted] (S) (P)

SUBJECT: [redacted] (OO:WFO)

ReBulet 3/28/63, requesting Legat, London, to inter-
view [redacted] American Embassy, London.

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] WFO files do not reflect any information concerning
educational background.

[redacted] (S)

- 2 - Bureau (S) b1
- 2 - New York (RM)
- 1 - WFO

REC-72 (S)

AP:mfd
(5)

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 abo/BC/oms
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/9/2000

62 MAY 16 1963

X-115

[redacted] b7c

b7C

1 - 85

7-30-63

~~SECRET~~

EX-115
REC-122

SAC, WFO [redacted] (S) b1

Director, FBI [redacted] (S) b1

[redacted] (S) b1 mt

ReWFOlet 7-12-63.

b7C
b2
b7D

[redacted]

- 1 - Boston ?
- 1 - Detroit 3
- 1 - Los Angeles

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED BY 39063abg/BCE/JS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1/9/2000

ETT:cgw
(7) *oot*

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- DeLoach _____
- Evans _____
- Gate _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

MAILED 4
JUL 30 1963
COMM-FBI

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

~~SECRET~~

ETT/JS
10/2/63

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

86

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

DATE: 7/12/63

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1

FROM : SAC, WFO [REDACTED] (S) (P) b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] b1

(OO:WFO)

CLASSIFIED BY 39063ab/BCE/LS
CLASSIFY ON: 25X
7/7/2000

ReNYlet 6/27/63.

BERNARD WILLIS GORDON has been [REDACTED] b1
in Europe with his family, which joined him in the summer
of 1962.

[REDACTED] b1 (S)

[REDACTED] b7c

[REDACTED] b7c (S) b1

- 2 - Bureau
- 2 - Boston (RM)
- 2 - Detroit (RM)
- 2 - Los Angeles
- 1 - WFO

[REDACTED] (S) (RM) b1

AP:cjj
(9)

[REDACTED] (S)

LA WFO
1-30-63
677

12 JUL 15 1963

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED] b1

b1

87

WFO

[redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~

b7c

[redacted]

b7c

Los Angeles letter dated 1/8/63, furnished to WFO as a enclosure to relet, and LAlet 1/3/63, indicate that GORDON

b7c
b2
b7D
b1

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

b1

~~SECRET~~

88

~~SECRET~~

LEADS

BOSTON

b7c

AT BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Will review material re [redacted] to determine if BERNARD WILLIS GORDON [redacted]

were in contact with [redacted] It is noted GORDON and [redacted] were originally from New York and later employed by the motion picture industry on the West Coast. [redacted] of the above individuals were in [redacted] periods of time during the pertinent period from [redacted]

LOS ANGELES

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

1. Will review indices to determine if [redacted] was in contact with GORDON, [redacted]

2. Will furnish WFO pertinent serials from GORDON's file.

3. Will review file on [redacted] identify business associates in his company and determine if they are [redacted]

b7c

(S)

b

DETROIT

AT DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Will review file on [redacted] identify business associates in his company believed to be located in Flint Michigan [redacted]

b7c

(S)

b1

~~SECRET~~

MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
UNLESS SHOWN OTHERWISE

89

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S) bl
FROM : SAC, BOSTON [redacted] (S) (RUC) bl
SUBJECT: [redacted] (S) bl

DATE: 8/9/63

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 dls/BCK/s
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/9/2000

(OO: WFO)

Re: WFO letter to Bureau dated 7/12/63.

A review of the files of [redacted] failed to indicate that he was acquainted with BERNARD WILLIS GORDON w/a

A review of the files on [redacted] failed to indicate that he was in Germany, France or Mexico during the period 1951-1954.

bl U.S.A.

Istanbul

- 2 - Bureau [redacted] (S) (RM) (S)
 - 2 - Washington Field [redacted] (RM)
 - 1 - Boston [redacted] (S)
- WDC:gm
(5)

REC-18

6 AUG 12 1963

167

~~SECRET~~

6 AUG 13 1963

7/22
U.S.A.
b7c

b7c

b7c

b7c

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

90

TO : DIRECT

TE: 11/1/63

WSS
WCP

FROM : SAC, I

Chemical Engineers

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

INDEXED BY 39063ab/REFMS
CLASSIFY ON: 25X
7/9/2000

pic

OO: W

7/63 and

Refer
Washington Field

Enclos^{ure} of Los Angeles letter dated 1/7/63. Field Office is

A thorough review of files at Los Angeles concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON [REDACTED] failed to reflect any information that [REDACTED] was in contact with any of the above individuals. b7C

A review of LA 100-22493 (BERNARD WILLIS GORDON) reflects that Washington Field Office has received all pertinent information from that file.

A review of all sections of LA file [REDACTED] fails to reflect any known association or contact with BERNARD GORDON. b7C

In 1960 [REDACTED] at Room 121, 6399 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles. This address was determined to be a telephone and mail answering service. Since late 1960 [REDACTED] has been reported as unemployed and lives from personal investments. A review of [REDACTED] file reflects no known business associates who were chemical engineers. b7C

- 2 - Bureau (Registered)
- 2 - Washington Field Office
- 1 - [REDACTED] (Encl 1) (Registered)
- 1 - Los Angeles

REC-22 (S)

NOV 6 1963

HHW:kls
(5)

68 NOV 18 1963

SECRET

[REDACTED] b7C
[REDACTED] (S)
bl

~~SECRET~~

b7c 92

100-134

(S) [Redacted]

1 - [Redacted]
1 - Liaison 39063 Ekl/602/6/8
for file PER [Redacted] letter 6/23/98
CLASSIFIED BY 39063 [Redacted] [Redacted]
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X / 6
BY LIAISON 9/9/2000

EX-105

Date: December 11, 1963

To: (u) (S) Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Mr. James Angleton

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [Redacted]
bl (S)

Handwritten stamp: [Redacted] 12/12/63

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

(b)(3)
(b)(1)
(CJ)(1)
(K)(1)
PER CIA

CC ONLY
MAILED 2
DEC 11 1963

[Redacted block] (S)

BY-COMMUTER-ENC.
0-5 DEC 12
COMM-EBK

[Redacted block] bl (S)

[Redacted block] bl (S)

- Tolson _____
 - Belmont _____
 - Mohr _____
 - Casper _____
 - Callahan _____
 - Conrad _____
 - DeLoach _____
 - Evens _____
 - Gale _____
 - Rosen _____
 - Sullivan _____
 - Tavel _____
 - Trotter _____
 - Tele. Room _____
 - Holmes _____
 - Gandy _____
- 1 - Paris (See note page 2)
1 - Foreign Liaison Unit
BST:cgw
(7)
- 57 DEC 16 1963

~~SECRET~~
X

OFF 11 8 12 44 83
SEE NOTE PAGE 2
Handwritten signatures and initials

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

~~SECRET~~

93

(u)

(S) [Director
Central Intelligence Agency]

64-2
77
64

[REDACTED]

b1

(S)

[REDACTED]

b1

(S)

NOTE FOR LEGAT, PARIS

Inasmuch as Legat, Paris, has not previously been furnished background information in this case, copy of this letter designated for his information and no investigation is requested at this time.

NOTE: Secret as incoming so classified and this of necessity refers to its contents.

- 2 -
~~SECRET~~

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

SECRET

ALL INFORMATION HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED UNLESS SHOWN OTHERWISE

94

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted]

b1

DATE: 11/18/63

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted]

b1

SUBJECT: [redacted]

b1

CLASSIFIED BY 3906326/STAS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/9/2000

(OO:WFO)

b7c

ReWFOlet 7/12/63, and DElet 10/16/63 enclosing information for WFO concerning [redacted] a Communist Party (CP) member, BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

b1

[redacted]

[redacted]

b1

b1

In an effort to determine if [redacted] who [redacted] GORDON during the pertinent period [redacted]

Job - New York

[redacted] Washington, D. C., as New York indicated [redacted] attended the above institutions. SA [redacted] was advised on 7/16/63, by [redacted] Georgetown University [redacted] that she was unable to locate any reference indicating [redacted] attended that university. On 7/17/63, [redacted] Registrar's Office, [redacted] advised [redacted] she could locate no record indicating [redacted] attended the university.

b1

- 2 - Bureau
- 1 - WFO

AP:mfd
(3)

Let
1 - Paris
2/11/63
AS/og

SECRET-112

REC-39

NOV 19 1963

b1

b7c

[redacted]

b1

b1

(S)

b1

[REDACTED]

(S)

b7c

re [REDACTED] The interview continues with additional questions but nothing additional re GORDON. Cr 40 ?

[REDACTED]

b1

(S)

The interview continues, but no pertinent information is noted.

COMMENTS

[REDACTED]

b1

(S)

REC-104

100

b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

(S) [Redacted]

(S) 39063 [Redacted]

Let's handle per OGA

CLASSIFIED BY 39063/ [Redacted] BY LIAISON
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/11/2000

Date: June 2, 1964

To: (u) Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Mr. James Angleton

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [Redacted]

b1

b1

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(b)(3)
(S)(2)
per CIA

Enclosed

MAILED JUN 3 1964 COMM-FBI

[Redacted]

b1

[Redacted]

b7c

- Tolson
- Belmont
- Mohr
- Casper
- Callahan
- Conrad
- DeLoach
- Evans
- Malone
- Rosen
- Sullivan
- Tavel
- Trotter
- Tele. Room
- Holmes

- 1 - London
- 1 - Paris
- 1 - Bern
- 1 - Mexico
- 1 - Ottawa
- 1 - WFO
- 1 - Los Angeles
- 1 - New York
- 1 - Foreign Liaison Unit

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

EIT:cgw
64 JUN 21 1964
TELETYPE UNIT

SEE NOTE LAST PAGE

~~SECRET~~

101

(S) [Director
Central Intelligence Agency]

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(S)(1)
(K)(1)
Per CIA
& FBI

[REDACTED] (S)

(b)(1)
(b)(3)
(S)(1)
(K)(1)
Per CIA
& FBI

[REDACTED] (S)

Enc. 4

~~SECRET~~

102

~~SECRET~~

62

(S) [Director
Central Intelligence Agency]



b1

(S)

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 6/11/64 BY 103

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1

FROM : SAC, WFO [REDACTED] (S) (P) b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S)
(OO: WFO)

CLASSIFIED BY 39032/ld/2004/US
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/11/2000

[REDACTED] (S)

Enclosed for the Bureau are two copies each of photographs of GORDON [REDACTED] taken in connection with their passport application in July, 1962.

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

- 2 - Bureau (Enc. 3) (S)
- 1 - Los Angeles (Info) (RM)
- 1 - New York (Info) (RM)
- 1 - WFO

AP:mfd
(5)

EX-114

72 JUN 22 1964

JUN 12 1964
[REDACTED] b7c

104

b1

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED] (S)

b7c

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

LEADS

b7c

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

[REDACTED]

b7c

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

X

105

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED BY 2003 elc/BCE/AS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/1/2000



61



(S)

ENCLOSURE

X

106

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED BY 3906
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X

b1

ENCLOSURES TO BUREAU (6)

Bufile [redacted] (S)
WFOfile [redacted]

Memo dated 6/11/64.

~~SECRET~~

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFO
HEREIN
IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE
108

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

DATE: 6/10/64

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S) b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

Reference Bureau letter to Los Angeles dated 5/28/64.

In compliance with request set forth in referenced letter there are enclosed herewith for the Bureau two (2) copies of a passport photo of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON dated 1958 taken about July, 1958, at Los Angeles, in connection with issuance of United States Passport Number 1005323 to GORDON.

50 for [unclear]

CLASSIFIED BY 390632/bj/BCE/PLS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 7/11/2000

201 X31

REC- [REDACTED] (S)

JUN 12 1964

- (2) - Bureau (Encl. 2) (RM)
- 1 - Washington Field (Info)
- 1 - Los Angeles

ENCLOSURE ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

HHW:dmr
(4) 18

58 JUN 22 1964

b7c

(S) b1

109

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 11/11/2008 BY 39063/BJE/PLS

ENCLOSURES TO BUREAU (2) PHOTOS

b1

BU [REDACTED] (S)
LA [REDACTED]

By letter dated 6/10/64

CLASSIFIED BY 39063/BJE/PLS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/11/2008

0

COPIES DESTROYED
369 JUN 19 1970

b1



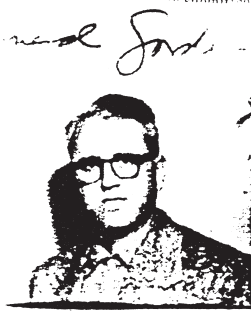
[REDACTED]

(S)

ENCLOSURE

X

110



BERNARD GORDON
1958

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

111

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 8/26/64

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted] (P) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY 3963 sel/bct/lys
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 7/17/2000

(OO:WFO)

[redacted]

b7c

[redacted]

b7c

He did not recall as frequenting the American Embassy and could not identify a photograph of either [redacted] or BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, [redacted]

b1

[redacted]

b7c

[redacted]

b7c

2 - Bureau
1 - WFO

AP:mfd
(3)

Copy to London
by routing slip for
 info action
date 8-31-64
by [signature]

EX-108

[redacted]

b7c

(S) b1

(S) b1

112

WFO

b1

(S)

SEX

The file also reflected

[REDACTED]

b7C

The file reflects

[REDACTED]

b7C

REQUEST OF THE BUREAU

[REDACTED]

b1

(S)

LEADS

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

Will review Military Attache Security Section, USA,
files re [REDACTED] and make recommendations as to
whether or not he should be interviewed.

b7C

X

MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA FPMR REG. 1.1.27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~ X

113

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) bl

DATE: 10/30/64

FROM : SAC, WFO [REDACTED] (P) bl

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) bl

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 elj/bcs/jus
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/11/2000

(OO:WFO)

ReWFOlet 8/26/64, and Legat, London, letter dated 10/8/64, both instant caption.

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

bl

bl

Mexico

- 2 - Bureau
- 2 - Baltimore (RM)
- 1 - WFO

md REC-17

1 NOV 2 1964

EX 110

AP: mfd
(5)

64 NOV 9 1964

609K

X

[REDACTED]

b7c

114

WFO [redacted] (S)

b1

LEADS

BALTIMORE DIVISION

AT FORT HOLABIRD, MARYLAND

[Large redacted block]

b1

(S)

WASHINGTON FIELD OFFICE

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

[Redacted block]

(S)

b1

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-107

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

SECRET

b1

116

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

DATE: 2/10/65

FROM : SAC, WFO [REDACTED] (S) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S)
(OO:WFO) b1

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

- 2 - Bureau
- 2 - Pittsburgh (Enc. 2) (RM) ?
- 1 - WFO

REC-112

HLD:jas
(5)

CLASSIFIED BY 37063clw/BOS/RS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/14/2000

22 FEB 11 1965



56 FEB 23 1965

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

b1

120

b1

PG

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED] examined the photograph of
BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, but did not recognize him as anyone
they had ever met either in [REDACTED] presence or elsewhere.

[REDACTED]

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

123
ALL INFO HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1

LATE: 7/2/65

FROM : SAC, WFO [REDACTED] (S) b1 (P*)

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 elw/RCF/TMS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/11/2000

(OO:WFO)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S) b1 REC-54

*Rec'd Liaison
7-15-65 NLL/bty
1cc of 141/2/17a/160 RB*

- (2) - Bureau (Enc. 8)
- 1 - WFO

ENCLOSURE

b7c

JUL 8 1965

~~SECRET~~



AP:11w
(3)

51 JUL 22 1965

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

[REDACTED] (S) b1

SECRET

b1

b1

125

REC (S) [redacted]

1 - Liaison
1 [redacted]

BY LIAISON

Date: June 14, 1965

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

To: (S) Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Mr. James Angleton

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [redacted]

[redacted] (S)
6/15/65
6(X3) Per
CJ(1) CIA

[redacted] (S)

b1

b(X3)
554
PER
CIA

MAILED 30
JUN 15 1965
COMM-FBI

We would appreciate receiving any data you have developed or received in this matter which has not previously been furnished to this Bureau. We particularly would like to be advised whether your Agency has any information indicating Bernard Willis Gordon or [redacted] have any plans to return to the United States. [redacted] we are considering interviewing these men upon their return to this country.

1 - WFO [redacted] (S) b1

REL:skp:gow
(6)

Handled per OGA Letter 6/1/65
39023-7w) per 6/8/65
CLASSIFIED BY 39023elw/BAE/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X

[redacted] (S)

b1

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- DeLoach _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

SECRET

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

[Handwritten signatures and initials]

13 JUN 21 1965 TELETYPE UNIT

126

WFO



(S)

b1

~~SECRET~~



b1

Results of New Haven's investigation should be furnished WFO, and New York.

X

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-107

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

127

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S) b1

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK [REDACTED] (S) b1 (RUC)

~~SECRET~~

DATE: SEP 2 1965

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

(OO:WFO)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S) b1

[REDACTED] (S) b1

CLASSIFIED BY 39025 JLB/BJG/S
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 9/19/2000

The NYO, in an effort to establish a degree of association between BERNARD WILLIS GORDON and [REDACTED] makes the following observations from the material available at the NYO.

In LA report of SA [REDACTED] captioned "League of American Writers; IS-C" dated 10/25/43 it was determined a BERNARD GORDON was active in (LAW), Branch "L",

- 2-Bureau (RM) (S) b1
- 2-Washington Field [REDACTED] (RM)
- 1-New Haven (Info) - (RM)
- 1-New York

REC-62

12 SEP 3 1965

JJS:caa
(6)

[REDACTED] (S) b1

128

NY [redacted] (S)

b7c

NW Section (Documentary film). It was also noted that a [redacted] was active in LAW and was [redacted] of a seminar which dealt with Pan American affairs. It will be noted that BERNARD W. GORDON left NYC in September, 1940 and went to work as a free lance writer in Hollywood, California.

NY
MILCO

[Large redacted block]

b7c

It was also noted from material at NYO that [redacted] was a member of LAW during the 1940s.

It is possible from a review of material at NYO that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON could have known [redacted] or [redacted]

b7c

[redacted] from his activity with LAW and other front group activity at LA during the late 1940s, since all were active in this area.

It is being left to the discretion of WFO to pursue this development since this area of investigation may have already been covered by the LA office in their search [redacted] (S)

One copy of this letter to NH for information in view of LA request to review [redacted] file.

b7c

X

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

5010-107

Memorandum

129

~~SECRET~~

DATE: 10/25/65

TO: DIRECTOR [REDACTED] (S) b1

FROM: SAC, NEW HAVEN [REDACTED] (RUC) b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S) b1

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

(OO: WFO)

Re: WFO letter to Bureau, 8/25/65,
New York letter to Bureau, 9/12/65.

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

CLASSIFIED BY 3906326/BCE/TJS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/16/2000

REC- 48

[REDACTED] (S) b1

16 OCT 27 1965

- 2- Director [REDACTED] (RM) b1
 - 2- WFO [REDACTED] (RM) b1
 - 2- New York [REDACTED] (RM) b1
 - 1- New Haven [REDACTED] (S)
- PHD:cah
(7)

b7c

[REDACTED] (S) b1



70 NOV 2 1965

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

(130)
670

b1

1 - Liaison

(S) [redacted] (S)

1 - [redacted]

~~SECRET~~

Date: November 5, 1965

BY LIAISON

To: Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Mr. James Angleton

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [redacted]

(u) (S)
Angleton
11/8/65
[initials]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED BY 3803/3ab/BJB/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
[initials]

[Large redacted block of text]

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- DeLoach _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Rm. _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

1 - WFO

MAILED 19
ECL-210ney
NOV 8 1965
COMM-FBI

~~SECRET~~

19 NOV 9 1965

REL:hrt
(6) note page two

69 NOV 12 1965

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

[Handwritten signatures and initials: wsc/jew, wats]

~~SECRET~~

1 - Liaison

1 [REDACTED]

REC-125
(S)

Date: December 2, 1965

To: Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Deputy Director, Plans

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [REDACTED]

BY LIAISON

RECEIVED
WHEN SHOWN OFFERIVE

(U) (S)

[REDACTED] (U) (S)

bl

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

bl

Enclosures: - 2

REL:gow

(5)

See note page two.

CLASSIFIED BY 39032/SL/ST
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
1/16/2000

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- DeLoach _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

~~SECRET~~

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

51 DEC 13 1965

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

[Handwritten signature]

WOS

[Handwritten initials]

133

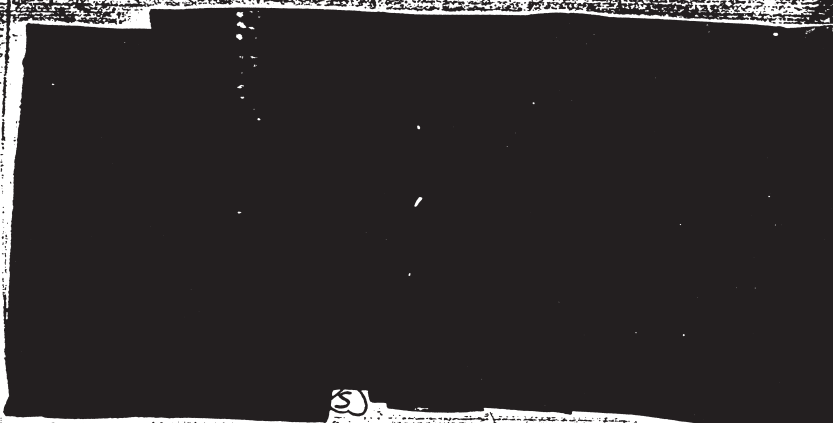
(U)

SECRET

(A) [Director
Central Intelligence Agency]

b1

NOTE:



SECRET
-2-

140

b1

~~SECRET~~

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

b7c

[REDACTED] was not certain of the circumstances under which [REDACTED] met the Gordons, but believes it was through [REDACTED] or other social function. Neither [REDACTED] nor [REDACTED] were closely associated with the Gordons and are not familiar with Gordon's background. [REDACTED] believes he met Gordon and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] At the latter function, [REDACTED] and the Gordons were guests of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] cannot recall any instance where he visited the Gordons' apartment or vice versa. b7c

Refer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] after viewing passport type photographs of Bernard Willis Gordon [REDACTED] identified [REDACTED] as the Gordons with whom he was acquainted in Madrid. After viewing a photograph of [REDACTED] did not

b7c

~~SECRET~~

141

b1

SECRET

[REDACTED]

Identify her from the photograph. [REDACTED] was aware that Gordon [REDACTED] but he could not recognize her although he saw her on one occasion.

b7c

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b1

SECRET

SECRET

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] could not recall the circumstances under which she first met [REDACTED] but believes it possibly was sometime in August, 1963, at a luncheon given by [REDACTED] or some other social function at a later date. [REDACTED] was not closely acquainted with either of the Gordons, and was not able to furnish any information concerning the Gordons' background. She recalled seeing Gordon working in the position of the Samuel Bronston Studios Annex utilized by [REDACTED] of Security Pictures, the

for the movie, "The 55 Days of Peking". Gordon

On one occasion [REDACTED]

SECRET

143

[REDACTED]

(S) b

SECRET

b7c

[REDACTED]

The [REDACTED] Gordons at a [REDACTED] in approximately [REDACTED] who reside at [REDACTED] by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Madrid. [REDACTED] in Madrid, and on this occasion gave [REDACTED] official of [REDACTED] (phonetic) an [REDACTED] company, who visited the company offices in Spain. [REDACTED] recalled that [REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED] believed to be a [REDACTED] was also in attendance at the party. He was accompanied by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and who occasionally did some work for [REDACTED] was not able to recall anyone who associated closely with the Gordons, whom she described as a very pleasant and likeable couple.

Spain

The [REDACTED] again met the Gordons at a [REDACTED] in early 1965. The [REDACTED] and the Gordons were [REDACTED] guests of the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. On this occasion the Gordons were [REDACTED] name unrecalled.

Other individuals in the movie colony recalled by [REDACTED] as attending the same functions as the Gordons are [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] who was [REDACTED] battle of the Bulge, and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] after viewing passport type photographs of Bernard Willis Gordon, [REDACTED] identified them as the Gordons with whom she was acquainted in Madrid.

b7c

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

147

b7c

b1

1 - Liaison
1 - [redacted]

REC-28 (s) [redacted] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Date: January 13, 1966

To: (U) (S) [Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Attention: Deputy Director, Plans]

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director

Subject: [redacted] (S) b1 (S)

b1 (S) [redacted]

[redacted] (S)

Our files are being reviewed and any pertinent information located will be promptly furnished to you.

BST:gow
(5)
NOTE:

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 elj/RS/PS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
[handwritten initials]

[redacted]

b1

- Tolson _____
- DeLoach _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- avel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

BY MAILER SVC.
COMM-FBI
JAN 14 3 29 PM '66

GROUP 1
Exclude from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

50
50 FEB 1 1966
MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

[handwritten signatures and initials]

156

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

b1

~~SECRET~~

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

DATE: 4/13/66

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S) (P) b1

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S)

CLASSIFIED BY 3963 elw/BCE/ms
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1
9/18/2000

(OO WFO)

Re WFO letter to Director 1/14/66, and LHM dated 1/14/66.

b7c

Enclosed for the Bureau are five copies of an LHM reflecting information concerning [REDACTED]. One copy of this LHM is submitted to New York for information. Two copies are submitted for WFO.

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

Referenced letter dated 1/14/66, reflects that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON (suspect) in this case, rented an apartment from [REDACTED] in Paris. GORDON introduced himself to the latter by [REDACTED] residing at [REDACTED] Beverly Hills (California). [REDACTED] was described [REDACTED]. It was indicated that GORDON did not know [REDACTED] well, as he did not mention him to [REDACTED] the initial telephone call regarding the renting of an apartment.

b7c

In view of information concerning [REDACTED] developed through source at Los Angeles, and since it was indicated that GORDON did not know [REDACTED] Los Angeles does not believe that interview of [REDACTED] concerning GORDON would be productive of desired information reflecting intelligence activities of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON. (S)

b7c

- 2 - Bureau (Enc. 5) (REGISTERED) REC-47 [REDACTED] (S)
 - 2 - WFO (Enc. 2) (REGISTERED) [REDACTED] b1
 - 1 - New York (Enc. 1) (info) (REGISTERED) 15 1536
 - 2 - Los Angeles (S)
- HHW:rg
(7)

b1

(S)

b7c

50 APR 22 1966

X

[REDACTED]

DATE FORW. 4-17-66
HOW FORW. 175
BY [REDACTED]

167

b1

X

WFO [redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

b1

REQUEST OF THE BUREAU

[redacted] (S)

b1

*Handled
with [unclear]
4/23/64
[unclear]*

[redacted] (S)

b1

discontinued

X

171

WFO

[REDACTED]

(S)

b1

~~SECRET~~

if ever he will return to the U.S.

[REDACTED]

b1

[REDACTED]

(S)

LAlet of 1/3/63 advised that no information concerning suspect GORDON had been received from informants of the Communist Party (CP) and related activities at Los Angeles since June, 1959. WFO file in instant matter reveals that no information concerning subject's participation in such activities has been developed since GORDON has been living abroad.

Insofar as the original allegations in this case are concerned, it is believed that our investigative efforts rightfully were expended to determine suspect GORDON's activities in the U.S. prior to his departure to Europe in 1960. We were particularly interested in his activities from December, 1950, until his 1960 departure when he was residing in the Los Angeles area.

(S) (u)

[REDACTED]

b1

b7c

If Los Angeles is unable to furnish prospective interviewees, it appears that our remaining investigative step, unless something unforeseen arises, is to further develop

~~SECRET~~

172

(16)

b1

WFC [redacted] (S)

~~SECRET~~

the case against suspect GORDON by interviewing him when and if he returns to the U.S. If the interview of suspect GORDON is approved by the Bureau after his return to the U.S., the interview will most likely be conducted by the Los Angeles Office, or New York because of his prior residences in the Los Angeles and New York areas. Therefore, these offices, particularly Los Angeles, should be prepared for the interview if approved by the Bureau after suspect GORDON's return.

If GORDON [redacted] Gordon [redacted] it is believed that an effort should be made to interview her separately, with Bureau approval; but if she returns alone or with [redacted] it is not believed that either should be interviewed concerning suspect GORDON.

b7c

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

b1

~~SECRET~~

b1

176

b1

WFG

[REDACTED] (S)

~~SECRET~~

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

[REDACTED] (S)

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

TRAVELS OF SUSPECT GORDON,

[REDACTED]

b7c

b1

177

WFO [redacted] (S)

b1

~~SECRET~~

b1

[redacted] (S)

The travels of GORDON, [redacted] have been noted with interest. Suspect GORDON has been in Europe since 1960 and [redacted] has been in Europe since approximately [redacted]

b7c

[redacted] went to [redacted] to live in [redacted] and returned to the U.S. in [redacted] and then resided at [redacted]. It is noted that [redacted] resided there and that BERNARD WILLIS GORDON visited Italy. [redacted]

b1

[redacted] (S)

[redacted] (S)

b1

CONCLUSIONS

(1) It is believed that all logical investigation has been conducted in the U.S. concerning BERNARD WILLIS GORDON unless Los Angeles reveals other individuals who may be discreetly interviewed regarding his activities between 1950 and 1960. It appears that our investigative activity revolves

178

WFO [redacted] (S) b1

X

around when, if ever, suspect GORDON will return to the U.S. so we can attempt to interview him.

(2) If suspect GORDON returns to the U.S., it is believed he should be interviewed after Bureau approval for same has been obtained.

(3) [redacted] it is believed that she should be interviewed separately with Bureau approval.

b7c

(4) If [redacted] returns alone or [redacted] it is believed neither should be interviewed.

[redacted] (S)

b1

[redacted] (S)

b1

(6) [redacted] (S)

b1

(7) Inasmuch as it appears most probable that any interviews of the principals involved in this case will be conducted by Los Angeles or New York, it is believed that those offices should be furnished copies of all future correspondence in this matter.

LEADS:

LOS ANGELES

179

b1

WFO [redacted] (S)

X

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Will review file (100-22493) on BERNARD WILLIS GORDON and advise whether there remains anyone who can be discreetly interviewed for additional information concerning suspect GORDON's activity during the period 1950-1960.

b7c

Will review pertinent files and advise whether [redacted] can be discreetly interviewed at this time regarding BERNARD WILLIS GORDON.

b7c

Will note in the enclosed WFO LHM that [redacted] called [redacted] in Los Angeles, California, telephone number [redacted]. Will identify the subscriber to this telephone number and advise whether Los Angeles files contain any pertinent information regarding the subscriber or [redacted].

b7c

Will review the data appearing in the 1965 International Motion Picture Almanac concerning Security Pictures, Inc., and discreetly obtain information concerning this organization. Will advise if it has any pertinent information regarding [redacted] in the Almanac for Security Pictures, Inc.

b7c

Will verify the address of [redacted] whom WFO file reveals is [redacted] who was, in July, 1962, residing at [redacted] Los Angeles, California. It is noted that Mrs. BERNARD GORDON and [redacted] may visit [redacted] on their planned trip to California in July, 1966.

As noted previously, it is entirely probable, that if BERNARD WILLIS GORDON returns to the U.S. later this summer, he will be interviewed by the Los Angeles Office with Bureau approval; therefore, Los Angeles should prepare for same.

X

b1

CONFIDENTIAL

184

LA [redacted] (5)

On 8/15/66 a Special Agent of the FBI observed that 1253 North Curson Avenue, Los Angeles, [redacted] is located in a residential neighborhood of Hollywood. This residence has been recently painted. It is occupied by a [redacted]. A pretext interview with a [redacted] revealed that 1253 North Curson is owned by BERNARD GORDON who has been in Europe for several years. The residence has been rented to several families over the past three years. About 1½ months ago it was rented to a Negro family. This [redacted] stated [redacted] and [redacted] BERNARD GORDON, but does not know their present address or whereabouts.

b7c

LEAD

LOS ANGELES

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. Will continue efforts to determine whether BERNARD GORDON is at Los Angeles and will advise Washington Field Office and Bureau if he is located.

X

190

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

b1

LA [redacted] c

b1
c

[redacted]

(S)(C)

[redacted]

b7c

b7c

[redacted] (S)(C)

b1

[redacted] (C)

Re - The "Hollywood Ten"

1950-1951

b1

[redacted] (C)

1950-1951

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

191

b1

WFO

(s)

X

[REDACTED]

b7c

GORDON

BERNARD WILLIS

(s)(a)

[REDACTED]

b1

(4)

In the letter New York further noted that the family of BERNARD WILLIS GORDON formerly resided in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and [REDACTED] in Stamford, Connecticut. New York also noted that [REDACTED] was employed in the Bronx, New York, and the GORDON [REDACTED]

It was pointed out that if [REDACTED]

GORDON

GORDON

b7c

[REDACTED]

b7c

[REDACTED]

192

b1

~~SECRET~~

b7c

LA [redacted] (S)

It is not specifically clear whether BERNARD GORDON intends to accompany [redacted] to the U. S.

[redacted] (S)

b1

LEAD

SAN FRANCISCO

AT DAVIS, CALIFORNIA: Discretely ascertain through established sources at University of California at Davis

[redacted] BERNARD GORDON, were any information reflecting the current BERNARD GORDON. (S)(u)

b7c

~~X~~

FD-36 (Rev. 5-22-64)

202

F B I

Date: 10/23/67

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL AIRMAIL
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S) (RM)
FROM: SAC, LOS ANGELES [redacted] (S)
SUBJECT: [redacted] (S)
b1

25815

3206324/3027us
10/19/2000

OO: Los Angeles

Re Bureau letter to Washington Field 10/5/67, Washington Field letter to Bureau 10/13/67, Bureau letter to Los Angeles, 9/8/66.

U. S. Passport Agency, Los Angeles, advised on 10/19/67 that U. S. Passport No. H1215497 was issued to BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, born 10/29/18, Connecticut, current address 8729 Shoreham Drive, Los Angeles, on 10/17/67.

[redacted]

An established source at the [redacted] at Hollywood, California, advised on 10/19/67 that records [redacted] reflected BERNARD GORDON resides at 233 North Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California, telephone 278-4814. GORDON's agent is [redacted] of Paris, France. GORDON last worked for Security Pictures, Incorporated in Spain, whose Los Angeles representative is CHARLES SILVERBERG, an attorney. This source could not state whether GORDON is presently in Los Angeles.

- (3) - Bureau (RM) REC 30 (S)
- 1 - Washington Field [redacted] (RM)
- 1 - New York [redacted] (RM)
- 2 - Los Angeles (S)

13 OCT 23 1967

HMM/gja

(7)

c. c. [redacted]

Approved: [Signature] Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

55007 1967

b7c

b1

b7c

b1

b7D 204

X 1 - [REDACTED]

SAC, Los Angeles [REDACTED] (S) b1

11/6/67

REC-128

Director, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

EX-108

cc to [REDACTED]
by RLS [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] 11-15-67
[REDACTED]

b1

[REDACTED] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Reurlet 10/24/67.

[REDACTED] (S) b1

MAILED 2
NOV 0 1967
COMM-FBI

This interview should be conducted promptly and the results furnished to the Bureau in a form suitable for dissemination. You should also set out in appropriate cover communication, your recommendations for further investigation or interview of Bernard Willis Gordon in this matter.

REL: as
(4)

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 dlu/BCE/jms
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X

10/18/2000

[REDACTED] (S)

- Tolson _____
- DeLoach _____
- Mohr _____
- Bishop _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

X P [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

205

FD-336 (Rev. 9-18-64)
OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 10/24/67

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [redacted] (S)

cc to WFO
by RLS
msg 11-15-67

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S)

Re: BERNARD WILLIS GORDON

[redacted] (S)

b1

A. BERNARD WILLIS GORDON resides at 8729 Shoreham Drive, Los Angeles, California. GORDON is a free lance screen writer, last employed for Security Pictures Incorporated in Spain. GORDON is a white male. GORDON was born 10/29/18, in Connecticut and is an American citizen. No information is known indicating he is in ill health.

B. GORDON [redacted]

b2

C. BERNARD GORDON was reported as Labor Chairman of the Communist Party (CP) at Los Angeles in 1944. He refused to comply with requirement of a noncommunist affidavit when applying for a passport at Los Angeles in 1956.

[redacted] (S)

b1

- 3 - Bureau (RM)
- 1 - Los Angeles

REC-57

HHW/djy
(4)

16 OCT 27 1967

b7c

CLASSIFIED BY 39063als/BCE/ous
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
10/18/2000

[redacted] (S)

b1

10/24/67 let to SAC, LA
REL:aoe

213

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-108

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

X
(S) b1
(S) P) b1

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] DATE: 11/27/67

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: [REDACTED]

SEARCHED
SERIALIZED
INDEXED
FILED

OO: Los Angeles

39463 sub/BCE/jms
10/18/2000

Rebulet to Los Angeles dated 11/6/67 and Los Angeles airtel to Bureau dated 11/20/67.

Submitted herewith for the Bureau are six copies of a letterhead memorandum (LHM), captioned BERNARD WILLIS GORDON, reflecting the results of an attempt to interview GORDON regarding this matter. One copy of the LHM is submitted to Washington Field and New York Office for information.

An extra copy of this LHM is included for the Bureau for possible dissemination to Legat, Madrid.

b2

[REDACTED]

b1

GORDON was located at a new residence, 8747 Shoreham Drive, and interviewed briefly by SAs [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on 11/17/67. GORDON was very obviously reluctant to be interviewed by FBI Agents. He attempted to force the interview at the front door of his residence but reluctantly conceded and allowed agents to enter his office. GORDON appeared to respond to the interview as a typical communist might be expected to respond. He was unfriendly, curt and seemingly disturbed that FBI Agents would interrupt his work. He was questioned whether he knew [REDACTED] and he responded by asking many questions as to why the FBI would be interested. He

b7c

- 2 - Bureau (Encls. 6) (RM) (S) b1
- 1 - New York (Encl. 1) (RM) REG-21
- 1 - Washington Field (Encl. 1) (RM)
- 3 - Los Angeles (1 - 100-22493) (GORDON)

HHW/pab

53 DEC 11 1967

[REDACTED]

b1

[REDACTED]

(S)

b1

215



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Los Angeles, California

November 27, 1967

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 ch/BC/oms

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~
Bernard Gordon

10/19/2000

BERNARD WILLIS GORDON

The U. S. Passport Agency, Los Angeles, California, advised on October 19, 1967, that U. S. Passport No. H1215487 was issued to Bernard Willis Gordon, born October 29, 1918, Connecticut, current address 8729 Shoreham Drive, Los Angeles, California, on October 17, 1967.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised on October 19, 1967, that records

[REDACTED] at Hollywood, California, reflect that Bernard Gordon resides at 233 North Rexford Drive, Beverly Hills, California, telephone No. 278-4814. Bernard Gordon's agent is recorded as [REDACTED] of Paris, France. Gordon last worked for Security Pictures Incorporated in Spain. The Los Angeles representative of this corporation is Charles Silverberg, an attorney. [REDACTED] could not state whether Gordon is known to be presently in Los Angeles, California.

b7C
b7D
b2

On November 17, 1967, Bernard Willis Gordon was located by Special Agents of the FBI at his new residence, 8747 Shoreham Drive, Los Angeles, California. Gordon reluctantly agreed to an interview by Special Agents of the FBI. Gordon stated he recalled [REDACTED] as a [REDACTED] but denied any personal association with [REDACTED] in Hollywood or personal contacts with [REDACTED]. Gordon admitted that since 1960, he has been employed as a screen writer in Paris, France, and Madrid, Spain. Gordon refused to

b1

PROPERTY OF THE FBI

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

~~GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification~~

~~SECRET~~

(5)

ENCLOSURE [REDACTED]

227

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-104

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

b1

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED] (S)

FROM : SAC, LOS ANGELES [REDACTED] (S) (P)

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (S)

OO: Los Angeles

DATE: 2/27/68

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED BY 390632/BJL/HS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 11/14/2000

b1

b1

Re Washington Field letter to Director dated 1/23/68, and Bureau letter to Washington Field dated 1/3/68.

Submitted for the Bureau are five copies of a letterhead memorandum (LHM) captioned and dated as above. Two copies of LHM are submitted for Washington Field.

[REDACTED]

b1

SA [REDACTED] conducted a pretext interview with [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] California, on 2/13/68. Pretext utilized was Top Ten inquiry regarding neighborhood as result of an anonymous telephone call.

b7C

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 2 - Bureau (Enc. 5) (RM) ENC 29
- 2 - Washington Field (Enc. 2) MAR 7 1968
- 2 - Los Angeles

HHW/fem
(6)

b1

1cc by [REDACTED]
3/15/68 BST:els
b2

ENCLOSURE

b7C

b1

b2
3/15/68 BST:els

cc [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

b1

~~SECRET~~

234

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 7/7/66

FROM : SAC, WFO [redacted] (S) (P)

b1

SUBJECT: [redacted] (S)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

(OO:WFO)

b1

CLASSIFIED BY 39063 d/b BCS/MS
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X 1
9/21/2000

ReWFOlet, 6/29/66.

Enclosed to Los Angeles and New York is one copy each of the following items:

[redacted]

4. Copy of an envelope postmarked May, 1966, at Los Angeles, California, address to Mr. BERNARD GORDON, bearing return address of [redacted] Los Angeles 48, California.

5. [redacted]

- ② - Bureau (S)
- 2 - Los Angeles [redacted] (Enc. 5) (RM)
- 2 - New York [redacted] (Enc. 5) (Info) (RM)
- 1 - WFO (S)

ASB:mjw
(7)

REC-68
EX-108

14 JUL 8 1966

[redacted] (S)

b7c

[redacted] (S)

b1



245

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~ bl

~~SECRET~~

DATE: JUL 21 1966

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [REDACTED]

FROM : SAC, NEW YORK [REDACTED] (RUC)

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] bl

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HERE IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

CLASSIFIED BY 3903alw/ect/s
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X

9/21/2000

REWFOlet, 6/29/66.

On 7/11/66, [REDACTED] Diners' Club, 10 Columbus Circle, NYC, advised he could locate no record for BERNARD WILLIS GORDON. (X)(U)

On 7/11/66, [REDACTED] International Division, Diners' Club, 10 Columbus Circle, advised Diners' Club records concerning someone living abroad probably would be located abroad also. For example, a person residing in Madrid, Spain, could obtain a Diners' Club card there and records concerning him would be maintained in the Madrid Office of Diners' Club. He stated the phone number of the Madrid Office is 221-6510, and that [REDACTED] (X)(U)

b7c
b7d

Regarding LEONARD B. BOUDIN, the following is the current documentation for him:

bl

- 2-Bureau (RM)
- 2-Washington Field [REDACTED] (RM)
- 1-New York

REC 29

[REDACTED]

JUL 22 1966

CSF:kmm
(5)

Classified by [REDACTED]
Declassify on: OADR
17 Oct 99

[REDACTED] bl

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~



244

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
5010-107-02
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

~~SECRET~~

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S)

DATE: 7/27/66

FROM : [redacted] SAC, WFO [redacted] (P) b1

SUBJECT: [redacted] b1

(OO:WFO)

ReBulet 7/22/66, advising that additional investigation is not warranted in this matter. b1

[redacted]

*See RPT HT 7/28/66
requesting SF to contact
all sources at [redacted] C. Davis, Calif.*

[redacted] (S)

- 2-Bureau
- 1-Los Angeles [redacted] (S)
- 1-New York [redacted] (RM)
- 1-WFO [redacted] (S)

JUL 28 1966 b7c

ASB:bap
(5)

CLASSIFIED BY 390632ld/304/US
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X
9/21/2000

[redacted] b1

X



247
REC-26

FBI

Date: 8/4/66

Transmit the following in _____

(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL

AIR MAIL - REGISTERED

(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI [redacted] (S) bl
FROM: SAC, San Francisco [redacted] (S) (RUC) bl
[redacted] (S) bl
OO: WFO

Re Los Angeles airtel to Bureau 7/28/66.

Records of the Registrar's Office, [redacted]

[redacted], revealed that [redacted] born [redacted] place not indicated [redacted]

[redacted] Los Angeles, Madrid, Spain.

BERNARD GORDON, 1253 North Curson, Los Angeles, occupation writer, and [redacted] has never been a legal resident of California;

[redacted] references who can attest that [redacted]

[redacted] to Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, and [redacted] Studio City, California.

By letter [redacted]

fornia, Davis, that the family residence address after August 23, 1966, would be c/o [redacted] Los Angeles, [redacted]

REC-26

- 3 - Bureau (AM-RM) [redacted] (S) bl
 - 2 - Los Angeles [redacted] (RM) (S)
 - 1 - Washington Field [redacted] (Info.) (AM-RM)
 - 1 - San Francisco [redacted]
- PCF:lg (7)

AUG 6 1966

CLASSIFIED BY 39063dlw/BCE/JS

Approved: [redacted] 56 AUG 17 1966 Special Agent in Charge

Sent: 9/28/3000 M Per [redacted]

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287

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

5010-106

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

- Tolson _____
- Sullivan _____
- Mohr _____
- Bishop _____
- Brennan, C.D. _____
- Callahan _____
- Casper _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Tavel _____
- Walters _____
- Soyars _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

TO

[Redacted]

b7c

SECRET

DATE: November 25, 1970

FROM

[Redacted]

b7c

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

SUBJECT:

[Redacted]

(S) bl

This memorandum recommends closing this investigation.

[Redacted]

bl

[Redacted]

(S)

bl

ACTION:

Case is being closed subject, of course, to being reopened in the event additional pertinent information is received.

1 - [Redacted]

1 - [Redacted]

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(S) [Redacted]

bl

(S)

bl

LW:as (3)

AW

REC 25 [Redacted]

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CLASSIFIED BY 390630/bj/25/15
DECLASSIFY ON: 25X

11/16/2000

22 DEC 1 1970.

5 AW

61 DEC 4 1970

01 DEC 4 1970

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Appendix B
Selected Pages from the
Hollywood Canteen File

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **LOS ANGELES**

FILE NO. **100-13342**

REPORT MADE AT LOS ANGELES	DATE WHEN MADE 4/14/43	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 3/24; 4/1/43	REPORT MADE BY <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div>	KH
TITLE CHANGED		CHARACTER OF CASE INTERNAL SECURITY - R CUSTODIAL DETENTION		b7C
HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN		# 349-973 ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 12/4/91 BY SP3 JCB		
SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: <div style="float: left; width: 15%; font-family: cursive;"> FC 1cc DP 8/8 2-5-47 </div> <p>The Board of Directors of the HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN met on March 22, 1943. The matter of white girls dancing with Negro soldiers and Negro girls dancing with white soldiers came up for discussion and disposition. The discussion became quite heated and a motion was made that the officers of the Canteen instruct white and colored girls that they were not to dance with soldiers of different color. The motion brought a storm of protest but was lost by an overwhelming majority. Race riots were predicted.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- P -</p> <p>REFERENCE: Report of Special Agent <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div> Los Angeles, 2/4/43.</p> <p>DETAILS: AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.</p> <p>The title of this case has been changed to add the name HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN.</p> <p><div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div> reported that there seemed to be a considerable complaint and dissatisfaction brewing at the HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN over the matter of the co-mingling of the white and colored soldiers and the female entertainers. <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 15px;"></div> stated that a great deal of talk and protest had resulted over a remark which apparently had been promulgated by the Communist element of the management that "white girls must dance with colored soldiers without discrimination, and white soldiers must dance with colored girls without discrimination."</p>				
APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>[Signature]</i>	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES			
COPIES OF THIS REPORT	100-259318-3		RECORDED & INDEXED	
5 Bureau 1 New York (inf.) 1 G-2, San Francisco 1 G-2, Los Angeles 1 DIO, San Diego 1 BIO, Los Angeles	8 APR 19 1943 <i>[Signature]</i>		2 Los Angeles	

RECORDED COPY FILED IN 100-1050-10-9

FLORENCE CADRIZ stated in a later argument that JOHN GARFIELD, screen actor, at previous meetings had favored mixed dancing.

Mr. JULES STEIN stated to [redacted] later that in his opinion the situation was becoming acute and that one of these days there would be a serious race riot at the Canteen.

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[redacted] advised that there is no doubt that the HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN is under the control of Communist elements, that it was a Communist inspired project in the beginning. The question of Negro equality is one of the basic planks in the Communist Party's platform. They are constantly raising this question to win the Negroes over to their influence, and if they can maintain the practice now being put into effect in the HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN, they hope to use it as an example for other sections to follow.

- PENDING -

EHW:PMC

May 12, 1943

SAC, Los Angeles

Re: ^OHOLLYWOOD CANTREEN
INTERNAL SECURITY - G

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated April 14, 1943, Los Angeles, California, entitled [redacted]

b7C

Hollywood Canteen; Internal Security - R; Custodial Detention." It is desired that in the future you carry information reported to you which concerns the Hollywood Canteen under the above captioning. Information concerning the individuals who were carried as subjects in the reference report should be incorporated in investigative reports entitled according to their names.

It is also desired that in connection with the above-captioned matter, you submit an investigative report setting forth that information contained in your files reflecting Communist Party affiliations or sympathies on the part of the individuals connected with the Hollywood canteen. In addition, it is requested that the instant case be kept in a pending status and that you report therein all information brought to your attention by confidential informants and reliable contacts concerning this organization. Any inquiries made by you must of necessity be made in a highly discreet manner and preferably investigation and inquiries should be confined to the use of confidential informants and reliable contacts.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2-1-01 BY 20463EML/AGP

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INDEXED

100-259318-4		
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JAN 4 1944 A.		

436

JAN 10 1944

ORIGINAL FILED IN 100-105058-10

Mrs. MARY FORD, wife of JOHN FORD. [REDACTED]

Baron WCREHEAD (unknown).

KAY KYSER [REDACTED] opposed to mixed dancing). b7C

RALPH CLARE (strongly opposed to Communism; strongly opposed to mixed dancing.)

Source stated that a motion was then made and carried that all verbatim statements made in the heat of discussions be stricken from the minutes and that only the results of the meeting be placed on record. Source further stated that although this motion carried, the Secretary JEAN LEWIN appeared to take down every statement made during the discussion on the race question while during the discussion on other matters she was not particularly attentive.

Source further advised that another conversation was had with Mrs. MARY FORD during which Mrs. FORD stated that she was worried about what may happen at the Canteen. She stated that one evening her young daughter was maneuvered into dancing with a Negro soldier, much to her embarrassment and that of her escort, a young white soldier. Source stated that Mrs. FORD made the statement at that time that she hesitated to let her daughter go to the Canteen on account of the aforesaid conditions.

Source stated that JULES C. STEIN was asked if he knew that CARROLL HOLLISTER, who is practically in control of the Canteen, [REDACTED] b7C

[REDACTED] Source stated that STEIN replied: "Yes, very definitely."

Source stated that it is his opinion from observation and from his acquaintance with a great many people connected with the Canteen that the actual operation of the Canteen is by Communists and Communist sympathizers, and that this faction has complete control of the affairs of the Canteen, and that the Canteen is to a very large extent a propaganda center. b2 b7D

[REDACTED] informed the Los Angeles Bureau Office that a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Hollywood Canteen was held on the night of July 8, 1943.

Source stated that about two months ago at one of the Board meetings, DALTON TRUMBO, the writer, and CARROLL HOLLISTER, the radio musician, who are members of the Board of Directors of the Canteen, had endeavored to prevail upon the other members of the Board to permit colored soldiers to dance with white hostesses at the Hollywood Canteen. Source stated that HOLLISTER on the night of July 8, 1943, requested that the minutes of the meeting of two months ago be read and that a motion be made to permit this matter to be rediscussed as it had been definitely shelved at the meeting two months prior to July 8th.

Source stated that JULES C. STEIN, a prominent member of the Board, at the first meeting had stated that such a proposal was definitely a Communist plot, or Communist plan to stir up trouble in the Canteen. Source further stated

that Mr. STEIN had stated that the FBI had somebody at the former Board meeting and that the FBI was definitely interested in Communist activities in the motion picture industry. Further that the FBI was getting all the information about the goings-on at the Board meetings on the part of the Communist members.

Source stated that there were twenty-eight members on the Board. Source further stated that presently the Board received a letter from the Screen Readers Guild in which it was stated that members of the Guild hoped there would be no racial discrimination at the Hollywood Canteen. Source stated that the letter also referred to the race riot which had taken place throughout the country and trusted that nothing like that would occur here. Source pointed to this as another example of the Communist line and its activities in Hollywood. Source stated that at the present time there are colored girls provided for colored servicemen and not long ago a white sailor danced with one of the Negress hostesses. Source stated that there has been a move made to increase the number of members on the Board of Directors but Source stated that HOLLISTER is leading the so-called Communist group on the Board in an effort to keep the membership down. Source has stated that he will endeavor to determine definitely who are Communists on the Board.

[redacted] has furnished information relative to the subversive activities and Communist connections of the persons who have devoted a great deal of time and effort to the management and activities of the Canteen. Following is the information which [redacted] was able to furnish relative to the Directors, the Executive Board Members, and others in this connection:

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CARROLL HOLLISTER:

[redacted] has stated that HOLLISTER is the Vice President of the Canteen and the original proposer and sponsor of the Canteen. He has stated that at a meeting of the Executive Board on March 22, 1943, HOLLISTER complained of the officiousness of the military police and shore police in questioning soldiers who visited the Canteen; particularly the Negroes. He stated that HOLLISTER has defended the practice of mixed dancing; that is, white girls with Negro soldiers and Negro girls with white soldiers which had been the custom at the Canteen. Source stated that HOLLISTER drew a vivid picture of the persecution of minorities under HITLER, particularly of the Jews and compared it with the persecution of the Negroes in America.

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Source has stated that HOLLISTER is a member of the Musicians Local #47 I.A.T.S.E.; that he came from New York City about eighteen months ago and that he cooperates with SPIKE WALLACE and SAM ALBERTS in the control of the Canteen. Source further stated that there is some information which indicates [redacted] in New York City before coming to Los Angeles but the details of his activities and connections with [redacted] are not known at the present time.

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JEAN LEWIN:

[redacted] has stated that JEAN LEWIN is the present Secretary of the Hollywood Canteen; that she is a member of the Screen Office Employees Guild; and is very active in both the Canteen and the Guild; that she is a consistent

[redacted] but this is not known to be a fact.

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DALTON TRUMBO (James Dalton Trumbo)

TRUMBO was born in Colorado and attended the Colorado University and the University of Southern California and has been a writer for M.G.M. Studio for the past five years or more.

TRUMBO is a well-known screen writer and a member of the League of American Writers and a Novelist. He was also a member of the American Peace Mobilization and was very active in writing and speaking for that organization. He was a member of the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League and made many speeches for that organization, and has written various pamphlets for that and other front organizations. He wrote a pamphlet in support of Communist and HARRY BRIDGES. He wrote the booklet "JOHNNY GOT HIS GUN" and "JOHNNY DOESN'T WANT HIS GUN". He is at the present time producing the motion picture "THIRTY SECONDS OVER TOKYO" for which he wrote the script.

TRUMBO is the author of "THE REMARKABLE ANDREW". In this connection [redacted] has reported that TRUMBO stated that one chapter of his book "THE REVOLT" was too true in regard to its dealings with the President's well-known Destroyer deal and that the publishers had asked him to delete it; that this passage in the book dealt with the idea of President ANDREW JOHNSON's ghost appearing to a news reporter and on being told that "50 American destroyers were being given to the British by the President, yelled, 'This is treason - - treason, I tell you'".

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The New York Bureau Office has reported that TRUMBO in company with DONALD OGDEN STEWART, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] all well-known Communist Party members or fellow travelers addressed a dinner sponsored by the Hollywood chapter of the League of American writers at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, California, on November 26, 1940.

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[redacted] further stated that the Federal Government had portrayed the laboring class in the use of troops in breaking up the strike at the North American Aviation, Inc., in June, 1941 at Inglewood, California, in violation of constitutional rights to strike and the right of free speech and assembly. TRUMBO stated that the Federal Government had taken it upon itself to discriminate against such racial labor heroes as HARRY BRIDGES, thereby violating constitutional civil liberties.

by the Communist faction on the Executive Board to make mixed dancing mandatory on the part of the hostesses, but this caused dissension among the board members, and it has now been decided as above.

The one millionth member of the armed forces has now passed through the doors of the CANTEEN. This event was celebrated two weeks ago.

[redacted] stated further that the activities at the present time are the same as heretofore. As this CANTEEN is for the entertainment of soldiers and sailors primarily and there is constant stream going through the building, the possibility of forthright propaganda being spread is limited. For this reason the CANTEEN is ceasing to get the same attention from the Communists as it did previously. One of its primary reasons for existence originally was that the Communists meant to use it to bring Negro and White soldiers together and to have the hostesses dance with Negro soldiers, the purpose being to break down discrimination on racial lines. As this attempt raised a storm of protest among certain members of the Executive Board, the attempt to force this issue has been laid aside temporarily.

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However, mixed dancing is being indulged in by individual action, but not to any great extent.

[redacted] further stated that the Communists do not look upon the establishment of the CANTEEN as a great victory. They are not showing the great interest they did formerly.

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- P E N D I N G -

REPORT MADE AT LOS ANGELES	DATE WHEN MADE 12/13/43	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 11/18 12/2/43	REPORT MADE BY [Redacted]
TITLE HOLLYWOOD CANTEEN		CHARACTER OF CASE INTERNAL SECURITY - C	
<p><i>see DR</i> <i>4-5-47</i></p> <p>SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: The same management and control are in charge of the activities of this organization. The question of mixed dancing of white and colored persons has been tabled for the present. Publicity about canteen is slackening, and the opportunity for spreading Communist propaganda is not believed to be so successful as had been anticipated. It is reported that Warner Brothers is going to make a picture entitled, "Hollywood Canteen."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- P -</p> <p>REFERENCE: Report of Special Agent [Redacted] dated 10/5/43, at Los Angeles</p> <p>DETAILS: <u>AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA</u></p> <p>[Redacted] as observed the activities of the Hollywood Canteen and has reported that the management and control of the canteen have remained the same since its inception.</p> <p>The question of mixed dancing by white and colored persons has not come to a final conclusion, but it has been voted by the Executive Board that this matter be permitted to remain as it has been, that is, a matter of personal choice; and, if whites wish to dance with the colored people, they may do so; and if the colored people wish to dance with the whites, they may do so; but there will be no compulsion or set rule requiring a person of one race to</p>			
APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>[Signature]</i>		DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	
<p>COPY DESTROYED R 170 NOV 23 1959 1-DIO San Diego 1-G-2 Los Angeles 2-Los Angeles</p> <p><i>ONE - [unclear]</i> <i>2 - [unclear]</i></p> <p><i>52 JAN 9 1943</i></p>		<p>100-259318-7</p> <p>19 DEC 18 1943</p> <p>RECORDED</p> <p>EA</p>	

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **LOS ANGELES**

FILE NO. 100-18780

REPORT MADE AT LOS ANGELES	DATE WHEN MADE 2/22/45	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE 2/16, 19, 20/45	REPORT MADE BY [Redacted] b7C kc
TITLE HOLLYWOOD CANTREEN			CHARACTER OF CASE INTERNAL SECURITY - C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

The campaign by certain members of the Executive Board of the **HOLLYWOOD CANTREEN** to compel all persons participating in its activities to embrace the "Equality of Races" program has subsided and it appears now that this matter is no longer an issue but that all races in military uniform may avail themselves of the facilities of the Canteen and be at liberty to chose their own social friends and companions without restraint. The motion picture, **HOLLYWOOD CANTREEN** has been on the screen for some time and it has been stated that the Canteen hopes to reap a large profit from its showing, which funds will be used for some military personnel recreation project.

*cc - Eni, 92
EKW - 17
4/13/45*

**ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12-7-98 BY SP-11/4/00**

- P -

REFERENCE:

b7C

Report of Special Agent [Redacted] dated January 9, 1945, at Los Angeles.

DETAILS:

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA:

[Redacted] has informed that the **HOLLYWOOD CANTREEN** remains a popular place of entertainment for the military forces and they claim that more than two million persons in military uniform have passed through the doors of the Canteen. This Source further stated that the Executive Board, at the beginning, had insisted on the mixing of the races on an

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APPROVED AND FORWARDED:	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES
COPY DESTROYED 5 - Bureau 1 - SID Los Angeles 1 - DIO Los Angeles 3 - Los Angeles <i>4/19/45</i> COPY BY FILE		100-259318-13 RECORDED & INDEXED EX-17 <i>[Signature]</i>

Filmography:

Bernard Gordon

Flesh and Fury (1952) Universal

Tony Curtis, Jan Sterling, Mona Freeman, Wallace Ford

Directed by Joseph Pevney

Written by William Alland (story), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Leonard Goldstein

The Lawless Breed (1953) Universal

Rock Hudson, Julie Adams

Directed by Raoul Walsh

Written by William Alland (story), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by William Alland

The Law Vs. Billy the Kid (1954) Columbia Pictures

Scott Brady, Alan Hale Jr., Betta St. John

Directed by William Castle

Written by Janet and Philip Stevenson (play), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Sam Katzman

Crime Wave (1954) Warner Bros.

Sterling Hayden, Gene Nelson, Phyllis Kirk

Directed by André de Toth

Written by John and Ward Hawkins (story), Bernard Gordon, Crane Wilbur,

Richard Wormser (screenplay)

Produced by Bryan Foy

Earth Vs. the Flying Saucers (1956) Columbia Pictures

Hugh Marlowe, Joan Taylor, Donald Curtis

Directed by Fred F. Sears

Written by Donald B. Keyhoe (book), Curt Siodmak (story), George

Worthing Yates, Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Sam Katzman

Zombies of Mora Tau (1957) Columbia

Gregg Palmer, Allison Hayes, Autumn Russell, Joel Ashley

Directed by Edward L. Cahn

Written by George H. Plympton (story), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Sam Katzman

(342) The Gordon File

Chicago Confidential (1957) United Artists

Brian Keith, Beverly Garland, Dick Foran, Elisha Cook Jr.

Written by Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer (book), Hugh King (story),

Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Robert B. Kent

The Man Who Turned to Stone (1957) Columbia

Victor Jory, Charlotte Austin, Barbara Wilson

Directed by Leslie Kardos

Written by Bernard Gordon

Produced by Sam Katzman

Escape from San Quentin (1957) Columbia

Johnny Desmond, Merry Anders

Directed by Fred F. Sears

Written by Bernard Gordon

Produced by Sam Katzman

Hellcats of the Navy (1957) Columbia

Ronald Reagan, Nancy Davis (Reagan), Arthur Franz

Directed by Nathan Juran

Written by Charles A. Lockwood, Hans Christian Adamson (book),

David Lang, Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Charles Schneer

The Case against Brooklyn (1958) Columbia

Darren McGavin, Maggie Hayes, Peggy McCay

Directed by Paul Wendkos

Written by Ed Reid (book), Daniel B. Uliman (story), Bernard Gordon,

Julian Zimet (screenplay)

Produced by Charles Schneer

The Day of the Triffids (1962) Allied Artists, Rank

Howard Keel, Nicole Maurey, Janet Scott, Kieron Moore

Directed by Steve Sekely

Written by John Wyndham (book) Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Philip Yordan (Security Pictures)

55 *Days at Peking* (1963)

Ava Gardner, Charlton Heston, David Niven

Directed by Nicholas Ray

Written by Bernard Gordon

Produced by Samuel Bronston

Cry of Battle (1963) Allied Artists

Van Heflin, Rita Moreno, James MacArthur

Directed by Irving Lerner

Written by Benjamin Appel (book), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Produced by Joe Steinberg

The Thin Red Line (1964) Warner Bros.

Keir Dullea, Jason Fithian, Ben Tatar, Jack Warden

Directed by Andrew Marton

Written by James Jones (novel), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)

Circus World (1964) Paramount

John Wayne, Claudia Cardinale, Rita Hayworth, Lloyd Nolan,

Richard Conte

Directed by Henry Hathaway

Written by Bernard Gordon (story uncredited), Ben Hecht, Julian Zimet,

James B. Grant (screenplay)

Produced by Samuel Bronston

Battle of the Bulge (1965) Warner Bros.

Henry Fonda, Robert Shaw, Robert Ryan, Dana Andrews, Pier Angeli,

Charles Bronson, Telly Savalas

Directed by Ken Annakin

Written by John Melson, Bernard Gordon (uncredited)

Produced by Philip Yordan

Custer of the West (1968) Cinerama Releasing

Robert Shaw, Mary Ure, Jeffrey Hunter, Robert Ryan

Directed by Robert Siodmak

Written by Bernard Gordon and Julian Zimet

Produced by Irving Lerner, Philip Yordan

Krakatoa, East of Java (1969) American Broadcasting Co.

Rossano Brazzi, Brian Keith, Maximilian Schell

Directed by Bernard L. Kowalski

Written by Bernard Gordon, Clifford Newton Gould

Produced by William R. Forman, Philip Yordan

Bad Man's River (1972) Zurbano Film S~A.

James Mason, Gina Lollobrigida, Lee Van Cleef

Directed by Eugenio Martín

Written by Philip Yordan

Produced by Irving Lerner, Bernard Gordon

(344) The Gordon File

Horror Express (1972) Benmar/Granada

Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Telly Savalas

Directed by Eugenio Martín

Written by Arnaud d'Usseau, Julian Zimet

Produced by Bernard Gordon

Pancho Villa (1972) Scotia International/Granada

Telly Savalas, Clint Walker, Chuck Connors, Anne Francis

Directed by Eugenio Martín

Written by Julian Zimet

Produced by Bernard Gordon

Surfacing (1981) Famous Players (Canada)

Joseph Bottoms, Kathleen Beller

Directed by Claude Jutra

Written by Margaret Atwood (novel), Bernard Gordon (screenplay)