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U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Un-American Activities,

**INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES
NEW YORK AREA—PART I
(TESTIMONY OF JEAN MUIR)**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
EIGHTY-FOURTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

—
JUNE 15, 1953
—

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COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PUBLIC LAW 601, 79TH CONGRESS

The legislation under which the House Committee on Un-American Activities operates is Public Law 601, 79th Congress [1946], chapter 753, 2d session, which provides:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, * * **

PART 2—RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RULE X

SEC. 121. STANDING COMMITTEES

- * * * * *
17. Committee on Un-American Activities, to consist of nine members.

RULE XI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

- * * * * *
- (q) (1) Committee on Un-American Activities.

(A) Un-American activities.

(2) The Committee on Un-American Activities, as a whole or by subcommittee, is authorized to make from time to time investigations of (i) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States, (ii) the diffusion within the United States of subversive and un-American propaganda that is instigated from foreign countries or of a domestic origin and attacks the principle of the form of government as guaranteed by our Constitution, and (iii) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any necessary remedial legislation.

The Committee on Un-American Activities shall report to the House (or to the Clerk of the House if the House is not in session) the results of any such investigation, together with such recommendations as it deems advisable.

For the purpose of any such investigation, the Committee on Un-American Activities, or any subcommittee thereof, is authorized to sit and act at such times and places within the United States, whether or not the House is sitting, has recessed, or has adjourned, to hold such hearings, to require the attendance of such witnesses and the production of such books, papers, and documents, and to take such testimony, as it deems necessary. Subpenas may be issued under the signature of the chairman of the committee or any subcommittee, or by any member designated by any such chairman, and may be served by any person designated by any such chairman or member.

RULES ADOPTED BY THE 84TH CONGRESS

House Resolution 5, January 5, 1955

* * * * *

RULE X

STANDING COMMITTEES

1. There shall be elected by the House, at the commencement of each Congress, the following standing committees:

* * * * *

(q) Committee on Un-American Activities, to consist of nine members.

* * * * *

RULE XI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

* * * * *

17. Committee on Un-American Activities.

(a) Un-American activities.

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INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES NEW YORK AREA—PART I

MONDAY, JUNE 15, 1953

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,
Washington, D. C.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met, pursuant to call, at 11 a. m., in room 225, Old House Office Building, Hon. Harold H. Velde (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives Harold H. Velde (chairman), Kit Clardy, Gordon H. Scherer, and Francis E. Walter.

Staff members present: Robert L. Kunzig, counsel; Raphael I. Nixon, director of research; Thomas W. Beale, Sr., chief clerk; Leslie C. Scott, research analyst; and Dolores Anderson, reporter.

TESTIMONY OF JEAN MUIR (MRS. HENRY JAFFE), ACCOMPANIED BY HER COUNSEL, HENRY JAFFE

Mr. VELDE. The committee will come to order. Let the record show that present are Mr. Clardy, Mr. Scherer, Mr. Walter, and the chairman, Mr. Velde. I have appointed this subcommittee for the purpose of this executive hearing.

Let the record also show that Miss Muir has volunteered, to the chairman, to come before this committee and give facts pertinent to the investigations being conducted by the committee into the infiltration of communism and other subversion in the entertainment field.

The committee welcomes the testimony of Miss Muir, which it feels will be of great assistance in continuing the work of the committee authorized by the House of Representatives.

Will the witness stand and be sworn, please?

In the testimony you are about to give, do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Miss MUIR. I do, so help me God.

Mr. VELDE. Let the record also show that Mr. Henry Jaffe, husband and attorney for Miss Muir, is present in the hearing room.

You may proceed with your questions, Mr. Counsel.

Mr. CLARDY. Mr. Chairman, may I add for the record that the witness has not come as the result of a subpoena issued by the committee, but had previously volunteered.

Mr. VELDE. Yes; that is right.

Mr. KUNZIG. Miss Muir I want you to state, also for the record, your reasons for voluntarily coming here today.

Miss MUIR. Yes. When the Aldrich Family incident took place and I was thrown off the show, people called both my husband and myself asking permission to create committees of protest, or Jean Muir committees. We turned down all these requests and offers in an effort to keep it out of the hands of any committees which might later become fronts, or be supported by Communists, and also to try and prevent me from being turned into a martyr by people with whom I did not wish to become associated. We didn't want it to become a cause célèbre. Unfortunately, it did become that. When they learned we would not join them, they began a violent and organized protest on my behalf anyhow, which caused me to become confident that the Communist Party, or members of the Communist Party fronts are actually trying to harm me, the result of this being that in so doing they hurt this committee. I feel this committee is doing a fine and educational job. They cannot use me to disparage this committee. As you know, they have tried many times. I, therefore, wanted to come here. What has happened to me in the last 3 years is not, I feel, the responsibility of this committee. I wanted to come because I felt this committee is not for the purpose of persecution, but for the purpose of finding out just who is causing this kind of thing.

Mr. CLARDY. May I interrupt? Since I was not a member of the committee at the time of which Miss Muir speaks, I wonder if someone could bring me up to date on this matter. I am not as familiar as I ought to be with its background.

Mr. SCHERER. That would be a help to me also.

Mr. VELDE. I would suggest, as chairman, that the committee carry on in the usual manner, with the counsel asking questions of the witness, if that is satisfactory with the witness or her counsel, so that we might have her general educational and occupational background. I am sure we will all be able to determine in this way exactly what the reason is for this executive hearing.

Mr. KUNZIG. Miss Muir would you tell the committee your educational and occupational background?

Miss MUIR. Yes. I was born February 13, 1911, in New York City, of a Scottish father and an American mother. My real name is Jean Fullarton. I studied at a dramatic school in Englewood, N. J., and graduated in 1929, at which time I went abroad to Scotland and visited with my father's family, and then went over to France and stayed there. I went to the Sorbonne University to perfect my French. I returned to the United States in August of 1930, and got a job on my first show as an understudy. I later played the part, and from then on played in several plays on Broadway over the period of the next 3 years.

Mr. VELDE. It might be of interest to the committee if you would tell us the names of the shows in which you appeared.

Miss MUIR. I appeared in *Bird in Hand*, by John Drinkwater; *St. Wench*, by John Colton, and *Life Begins*. I have forgotten who wrote that. It was a story about a maternity ward. These are all I remember right now. It was while I was appearing in *St. Wench* that I got an offer to go to Hollywood for Warner Bros. I went in January of 1933 and during the following 4 years made at least 25 or

30 pictures. Among them were *As the Earth Turns*, *Desirable*, *Dr. Monica*, *Stars Over Broadway*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Gentlemen Are Born*, *Orchids to You*, *White Bondage*, and so on. While I was in Hollywood, Warner Bros. sent me to London, in 1936, to make a picture for them in their English studio, which they were trying to build up at the time. I also did television work over there, in the early experimental stages. I came back here and played for a while in *Golden Boy*. I had in the meantime met Mr. Jaffe, and we were married late in 1940. I left Hollywood in 1937, during the summer, and did stock appearances in summer stock companies. I then went back to Hollywood and made 2 more pictures, 1 of them for M-G-M and 1 at the Fox Studios. I believe that was the *Lone Wolf Meets a Lady*.

I think that brings us up to date on my work, up to my marriage. During the subsequent years we had three children. I also worked in summer theaters and made one more picture, *The Constant Nymph*, for Warner Bros., with Charles Boyer and Joan Fontaine.

Mr. VELDE. When did you first start the Aldrich Family show?

Miss MUIR. I had been doing radio work, had my third child, and had done a little TV. Oh, I left out that I had gone to London in 1938 and played in two pictures, and then a little in TV. I started working in TV and did 2 or 3 shows. One, a Philco show on Sunday night.

That following August, in 1950, I was signed to play the part of Mrs. Aldrich, in the Aldrich Family show. It was to be a half-hour TV show. I was very excited about this, and went to dress rehearsal the Sunday evening before the time to start, and we were all told the show would not go on. The reason for this was not told to us at the time. Nobody seemed to know the reason, but a newspaperman on the New York Times called and found out about it, and it was on the front page of the New York Times the following day, all about me. Consequently it spread all over the country.

Mr. VELDE. Then you actually never did appear on the Henry Aldrich TV show?

Miss MUIR. No.

Mr. CLARDY. What date was that?

Miss MUIR. August 25, 1950. Since then I have not worked.

Mr. SCHERER. What appeared in the New York Times?

Miss MUIR. The fact that the reason for the cancelling of the show was because NBC had received, I believe, 10 telephone calls and 2 telegrams—I believe that was the number, wasn't it?

(Off the record discussion takes place between counsel, members of committee, and witness.)

Mr. VELDE. We will now go on the record again.

Mr. KUNZIG. Miss Muir, in order to clear the record, when was it you went to London, and did a show?

Miss MUIR. I went to London in 1936 for Warner Bros. I was under contract with them at the time. Then again in 1937, in the winter of 1937 and into the spring of 1938. I did a play called *People at Sea*, by J. B. Priestley.

Mr. KUNZIG. What I meant to clarify was the fact you mentioned in your previous testimony about going to London and doing TV shows in 1937. Did they have TV then?

Miss MUIR. Yes. BBC was experimenting in TV in the earlier stages.

Mr. KUNZIG. I wanted to be sure we had the record straight on the dates.

With regard to the front organizations that have not been listed by Counter Attack, and so forth, let us go into some of those, in order to tell the committee, the true story, and the actual facts as to what they were, and what your participation was in them.

First, the Congress of American Women. You were listed as a vice president of that organization. Tell the committee about that.

Miss MUIR. I had forgotten that I was an officer of that committee. I was for about 6 months. It came about through a Dr. Gene Weltfish, who was under Dr. Frank Boer. I met her at a party and she asked me to join the Congress of American Women, which was for the purpose of helping to solve the problems of women in this country.

Mr. KUNZIG. Is this the same Dr. Gene Weltfish who has received large publicity with respect to biological warfare?

Miss MUIR. Yes; I believe that is she.

Mr. CLARDY. I believe that is the one who spoke before the American forces in Korea.

Miss MUIR. Thinking this actually was what the organization was for, I said I would be very glad to join. During the following 6 months I never attended a board meeting. I never went to a board meeting. By the end of 6 months, the composition of the minutes and literature they were sending out had never reflected this idea about solving problems of women in this country. Instead it always seemed to have something to do with some kind of resolution to protect Russia, or something about somebody concerned with that in this country. I don't remember who were mentioned at this late date, but something about their tone began to make me very suspicious, and I resigned. Unfortunately for me, I resigned over the telephone, to the executive secretary, whose first name was Alice. I don't recall her last name.

Mr. KUNZIG. When was this, Miss Muir?

Miss MUIR. This was in 1945 and 1946.

Mr. KUNZIG. According to your testimony, you were in it for a brief period of time, and then resigned, but did so over the telephone?

Miss MUIR. Yes; that's right.

Mr. KUNZIG. For the record, the Congress of American Women was cited as subversive and Communist by Attorney General Tom Clark, in letters to the Loyalty Review Board, released June 1, 1948, and September 21, 1948.

It was also cited as subversive and Communist, and supported at all times by the international Communist movement, according to the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities, in their report on the Congress of American Women, House Report No. 1953, April 26, 1950 (originally released October 23, 1949).

It was also cited as "one of the most potentially dangerous of the many active Communist fronts." It was incorporated in January 1947, with national headquarters in New York City, and is the American branch of the International Democratic Women's Federation, which was formed at a Paris convention in November 1945 "at the

call of International Communist forces," according to California Committee on Un-American Activities Report, 1948, pp. 228-231.

Mr. CLARDY. Did I understand you to read that it was incorporated in 1947?

Mr. KUNZIG. Yes, incorporated in January 1947, according to the California Committee report.

Mr. CLARDY. And, Miss Muir, you resigned before any of these citations about it being subversive were handed down?

Miss MUIR. Yes.

Mr. SCHERER. What is the present status of the Congress of American Women?

Miss MUIR. I think it was dissolved. There is a big case about it.

Mr. SCHERER. Was Dr. Gene Weltfish one of the coauthors of *Races of Mankind*?

Miss MUIR. Yes.

Mr. CLARDY. I wonder if Miss Muir joined before it was organized into a corporation? In other words, it was a loose association and she may have resigned before it was organized in corporate form.

Miss MUIR. May I ask a question? What was the date of that Federation of Democratic Women? I can answer the question if I can figure out the date.

Mr. KUNZIG. The American branch of the International Democratic Women's Federation was formed at the Paris convention in November 1945.

Miss MUIR. Then I must have belonged to it before it formed a corporation. It was within a year after it had been over there.

Mr. CLARDY. The thought struck me after listening to the date of the incorporation, that it was probably a loose association of some kind, with you as nominal vice president, and you were out of it before it was organized as a corporation.

Miss MUIR. Yes, that is also my belief.

Mr. KUNZIG. Miss Muir, regarding the Artists' Front To Win the War. Were you a member of this front?

Miss MUIR. No. I would like to say something about that. On the day after the Aldrich Family incident, the New York Post quoted me as saying, "I honestly don't know what the blazes it is about, and of course I never remember being a sponsor." After thinking about this period, and having 3 years to do it in, I do remember having my picture taken with Rockwell Kent, and someone asking me to sponsor some dinner for an organization for winning the war. The artists wanted to win the war, and that seemed O. K. to me. I don't remember saying, "Yes," and I don't know whether Mr. Kent may have put my name in without my saying, "Yes." I may have said, "Yes." If it is the same organization as the one you are asking about, I don't know. You may have a copy of that picture in your files. But I think it was a show or something where I had a picture taken with Rockwell Kent painting a picture.

Mr. KUNZIG. The Guide to Subversive Organizations and Publications listed the Artists' Front To Win the War, and shows it as first cited as a Communist front by the Special Committee on Un-American Activities Report, March 29, 1944.

Secondly, as a "Communist organization" which grew out of a "mass meeting at Carnegie Hall in New York City, on October 16,

1942" (as shown by the California Committee on Un-American Activities Report, 1948).

Do you remember the date of this picture you have described as having been taken with Rockwell Kent?

Miss MUIR. No; I don't. Maybe you have something about it in your files.

Mr. CLARDY. Was that picture taken at, or about the time of, some dinner or celebration?

Miss MUIR. I just heard you mention this meeting in Carnegie Hall. Maybe it was at a dinner or function which preceded that mass rally at Carnegie Hall, which I did not attend.

Mr. KUNZIG. Is your acquaintance with this Artists' Front To Win the War confined merely to what you have testified here this morning?

Miss MUIR. That's right. Also I would like it in the record that I didn't attend that rally at Carnegie Hall.

Mr. CLARDY. Did you attend any meetings of the group?

Miss MUIR. Not that I recall.

Mr. KUNZIG. Let us turn to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare. Could you describe to the committee your participation in this organization?

Miss MUIR. I was a member of the New York committee of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare. The purpose of that committee seemed to me was a good purpose. It didn't want to interfere in the South in the way so many who have gone down and tried to tell the South how to run its affairs have done. It was to raise money to send down South to help people who needed help. I never met anyone, to my knowledge, who came from the southern part of the organization. I served on this board with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Channing Tobias, Mr. Walter White, a representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, a representative of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. I could not in any way think those people sponsored communism. They would be just the opposite, I should think. We gave a party which Mr. Estes Kefauver attended, to help make some money.

Mr. KUNZIG. When was this, to the best of your belief and knowledge?

Miss MUIR. In 19—. It was in the middle forties, I believe.

(Off record discussion takes place between counsel, members, and witness.)

Miss MUIR. To the best of my knowledge, it would be around 1945. It was dissolved, I believe, in 1946, but I had ceased associating with it before that because I had two children then and was too busy.

Mr. KUNZIG. What was the total period of time you were connected with this group?

Miss MUIR. About a year.

Mr. KUNZIG. And when was that?

Miss MUIR. In 1945 or 1946. It was after my second child was born, and about 6 months before it was dissolved. I just quit. I didn't resign.

Mr. VELDE. Did you do anything affirmative, like writing a letter, or making a telephone call, to withdraw from this organization?

Miss MUIR. No; I never did withdraw. I was proud of the committee.

Mr. KUNZIG. The Southern Conference for Human Welfare was cited as a Communist front which received money from the Robert Marshall Foundation, one of the principal sources of funds by which many Communist fronts operate, according to the Special Committee on Un-American Activities Report of March 29, 1944.

It was cited as a Communist-front organization, "which seeks to attract southern liberals on the basis of its seeming interest in the problems of the South" although its "professed interest in southern welfare is simply an expedient for larger aims serving the Soviet Union and its subservient Communist Party in the United States," (Report No. 592 of June 12, 1947, of the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities).

It was also cited as typical of completely Communist created and controlled organizations in the civic committee field. It received money from the American People's Fund, "A Communist financial organization," according to the California Committee on Un-American Activities Report of 1948.

(Off the record discussion between witness, counsel, and members.)

Mr. VELDE. Proceed with your questions, Mr. Counsel.

Mr. KUNZIG. May I ask, Miss Muir, how did you originally become involved with the Southern Conference for Human Welfare?

Miss MUIR. I was asked to take part in its activities by Mr. Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP. He was a very old family friend.

Mr. KUNZIG. You previously stated that before becoming a member or during the time you were active, you had no knowledge of any subversive or communistic activities of the conference?

Miss MUIR. No. It seemed to be a liberal organization. It may have been in the south that this activity was going on.

Mr. KUNZIG. May I turn back, for a brief moment, to the Congress of American Women again? It's letterhead of February 25, 1949, listed your name as vice president.

Miss MUIR. I have heard about that. That is one of the allegations, and if they used my name on their letterhead, then they used it without my permission, or else perhaps they were too poor to buy more stationery and just used the old with my name still on it.

Mr. VELDE. How many vice presidents were listed on that letterhead, Mr. Counsel?

Mr. KUNZIG. I have five listed.

Mr. SCHERER. Mr. Chairman, may I be excused? I have a bill coming up on the House floor at this time, and I must be there.

Mr. WALTER. May I be excused for the same reason, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CLARDY. I also have to run over because I have a bill which I must vote on, so would you please excuse me, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. VELDE. Let the record show that Mr. Clardy, Mr. Scherer, and Mr. Walter have been excused from this hearing for the purpose of going to the House floor on official business.

Mr. KUNZIG. I want to ask one further question about the Congress of American Women. Did you speak at a rally for rollback and price control on October 26, 1947?

Miss MUIR. I don't remember, but I may very well have done it.

Mr. KUNZIG. It was held at the Pythian Hall, at 135 West 70th Street, New York, by the Congress of American Women, and in 1947. Can you specifically recall it?

Miss MUIR. I don't recall it, no.

Mr. KUNZIG. However, you could have been at such a meeting. Is that correct?

Miss MUIR. Yes, because I was interested in price control.

Mr. KUNZIG. Will you tell the committee what interest you had in the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign?

Miss MUIR. Yes. When the Spanish Republic was elected and then Franco attempted to overthrow it, it seemed to me to be an abrogation of the rights of free people to vote for the head of a government which they wanted. Of course, after the Communists took over the Loyalist Party, I became less and less involved in it. The one thing I can remember doing definitely was at an auction at which I auctioned off a picture. Lionel Stander was at the same meeting. He auctioned off a picture also. Rockwell Kent was also there at that meeting. I think it was one of his pictures that I auctioned off. Because of the confusion about the picture business previously discussed, and the Artists' Front to Win the War, it is possible this really was the organization at which the picture was made with Rockwell Kent.

Mr. VELDE. What was the approximate date of this auction of which you are speaking?

Miss MUIR. It was about halfway through the Spanish War, I believe. It lasted 4 years, and started around 1936, so this was in New York and was around 1937 or 1938. That was my last connection with the Spanish situation.

Mr. KUNZIG. The Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign was first cited by the Special Committee on Un-American Activities Report, January 3, 1940.

Then the New York City Council Committee investigating the municipal civil service commission stated, "this organization suffered a split because of the charge of Communist domination. This organization likewise received Communist approval and support and was part of the network of organizations fostered by the Communist Party in its Spanish campaign."

Then in January of 1942, the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Counsel before the reviewing board of the Philadelphia County Board of Assistance also cited it as a Communist front.

Miss MUIR. My only real activity in it was this auction, at which I helped auction off a picture. I was very interested in the Loyalist Spain the first 2 years, and may have appeared at meetings for Loyalist Spain, but I never contributed any money.

Mr. KUNZIG. Did you know Lionel Stander?

Miss MUIR. Yes; I knew him. He comes into my testimony later.

Mr. KUNZIG. We will now turn to another group or organization known as the Progressive Citizens of America, Brooklyn Heights Chapter (Suite 4B-7, Montague Terrace). What connection did you have with that organization?

Miss MUIR. That started as an Independent Citizens Committee for Reelection of Franklin D. Roosevelt. I was a member of that committee. I spoke for Roosevelt continually during all his campaigns, except the first one. Anyone who knew me also knew of my great admiration for President Roosevelt, and I would like this to be in the record—I didn't ask questions, if it was for the President. I went out and stumped for him, on wagons and sound trucks. This

was my association with this committee. It later changed into either the PCA or the PAC, I don't know which one came first. At that time I was still a member of this committee, for a short while. Then when it turned into the other one, whichever the latter one was, which supported Wallace, and some of the same people were involved in this, I left it. I was not a member of that committee.

Mr. KUNZIG. The Progressive Citizens of America has been cited as a "new and broader Communist front for the entire United States" formed in September 1946, at the direction of "Communist steering committees" from the Communist-dominated National Citizens Political Action Committee "and the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions," by the California Committee on Un-American Activities Reports, 1947 and 1948.

Do you recall whether you were an entertainer at a Community rally on May 22, 1947, for the Progressive Citizens of America?

Miss MUIR. Would that have been during one of the campaigns?

Mr. KUNZIG. May 22, 1947, would not have been in a Presidential campaign year.

Miss MUIR. No.

Mr. KUNZIG. The handbill announcement of the rally was "Get off that fence—neighbor." Does that refresh your memory in any way?

Miss MUIR. I remember going over to Brooklyn. Was this in Brooklyn Heights? Once I went there for the B'nai B'rith, for a big meeting. I wish I could pin my positive recollection on the record. Another time I went to a house which might have been that address. I don't remember who was the sponsor of it.

Mr. KUNZIG. Do you have any further recollection in regard to it?

Miss MUIR. No, I can't even remember the name of the person who gave it.

Mr. KUNZIG. Do you recall sending a greeting to the Moscow Art Theater? According to the Daily Worker of November 1, 1948, you did that.

Miss MUIR. Yes; I did. I sent that telegram to Constantine Stanislov,¹ of the Moscow Art Theater, because that theater represents to the actors just about the best theater we have had in the past 100 years. It has had a tremendous influence on the training of actors. I didn't send it because it was a Communist organization. It was not. Stanislov was able to successfully put on plays which no other theater in Russia was allowed to do. He stood up against the regime from the first, according to my recollection. His reputation was so great—his world reputation was so great, that he was allowed to do this. A play like Czar Theodor, for instance, which was banned all over Russia, he succeeded in putting on. This was an artistic thing which I did, and just because the title of the theater was the Moscow Art Theater, I don't think I could be called a Communist for that.

(Off the record discussion takes place between witness, counsel, and members.)

Mr. KUNZIG. Let us turn to another organization. A letterhead of June 24, 1948, shows you as sponsor of Stage for Action, Inc. Were you a sponsor of that organization?

Miss MUIR. I do not remember being a sponsor of that organization. A young woman by the name of Sheelagh Kennedy, who was also closely connected with the Independent Citizens Committee of

¹ This is a reference to Constantin Stanislavsky.

the Arts, Sciences, and Professions, called or spoke to me and asked whether I would be interested in teaching acting classes. Since I had done some teaching in California, I was very interested in the job. I accepted, but the classes never came through, and I never did any teaching for the organization. I was in their office once. I don't recall, however, being a sponsor.

Mr. KUNZIG. Can you recall that one at all?

Miss MUIR. No, not being a sponsor. I have told you all I do recall about it.

Mr. KUNZIG. Is that the sum total of what you recall?

Miss MUIR. Yes.

Mr. KUNZIG. On Monday, August 5, 1940, there appeared before this committee, known as the Dies committee at the time, one John L. Leech. In his testimony, under oath, Mr. Leech testified as follows:

The CHAIRMAN. Now, let's take Jean Muir. Do you have any personal knowledge that Jean Muir is or has been a member of the Communist Party, or has contributed money to the Communist Party?

Mr. LEECH. Yes, sir. I have never seen, to the best of my recollection, the membership book of Miss Muir. I have, on several occasions, in study groups where I have been assigned or have been requested to lecture on some subjects of Marxism, attended study groups where Miss Muir has been present.

Have you ever attended study groups, studying Marxism, with Mr. Leech?

Miss MUIR. Not to my knowledge, with Mr. Leech. I was invited to what I thought was a party by Dorothy Parker and Tess Schlessinger in their home. I went to the party and found that a man by the name of Eli Jacobs was lecturing on Marxism. From the way he was lecturing, I realized he was not just trying to entertain us.

Mr. VELDE. To the best of your recollection what was the date of this party?

Miss MUIR. In 1936, I believe.

Mr. VELDE. Do you have information there that might give her any help on the date, Mr. Counsel?

Mr. KUNZIG. There are some dates coming up later here, but not specifically with regard to this.

(Off-the-record discussion takes place between witness, counsel, and members.)

Mr. KUNZIG. I will continue reading testimony by Mr. Leech:

On one occasion, Miss Muir and a group of other people made a trip to San Francisco in which I drove Miss Muir's car and later, up on the Pacheco Pass, between here and San Francisco, had an accident and wrecked the car. The California patrol photographed my license, photographed the actual accident, detained me for several hours because another car had been badly damaged, examined the certificate of registration on the car, made out in Miss Muir's name, and I later had the responsibility of having this car transferred to Merced, and later the Automobile Club disposed of the car.

The CHAIRMAN. Miss Muir was present in the car?

Mr. LEECH. Miss Muir was not in the car. Hunt and myself were in the car, which was a 1934 station wagon.

The CHAIRMAN. Where did you get the car?

Mr. LEECH. From Miss Muir herself, and Mr. Stander.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you ever drive Miss Muir yourself?

Mr. LEECH. I did not.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you ever have conversation with Miss Muir in reference to the Communist Party?

Mr. LEECH. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. In those conversations, did she admit she was a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. LEECH. I don't believe it was ever raised in that way.

The CHAIRMAN. What took place which led you to believe she was a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. LEECH. The fact that on one occasion, I believe in preparation for the congress—it was later held at Sacramento. However, I would not be certain that Miss Muir and Mr. Stander made this trip to San Francisco where other people and myself met with the committee and the leader of the International Labor Defense.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, Miss Muir and Mr. Stander were present?

Mr. LEECH. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And you were there?

Mr. LEECH. And I was there.

The CHAIRMAN. And you met—

Mr. LEECH. With the leadership of the International Labor Defense, district 30, in San Francisco, and with members of the California State committee.

I will stop there for a moment, Miss Muir, and ask you whether or not you knew John L. Leech, and whether you can explain to the committee this story with regard to your car being in an accident?

Miss MUIR. I want to explain this. I am under oath, and I am not going to break that oath. I believe that Mr. Leech lied about several things in that statement.

I first want to declare he has no right to say I was a Communist, or was led to believe I was a Communist. I am not a Communist, and have never been a member of the Communist Party, and have never contributed any money to the Communist Party, and as far as I know, to any front organizations that I knew were front organizations.

Now as to this story. I was at a party at Lionel Stander's house one evening. I don't remember how I met him, but actors meet each other on the sets at work, or through one way or another—

Mr. KUNZIG. Do you recall roughly when this party was held?

Miss MUIR. It was the day or the evening of this accident. I went to this party, where I met some people that I knew at that time, and others that I didn't know. There were three men among the rest of them, and during the course of the evening it came out they were going to San Francisco. Lionel Stander suggested that I come along too, for the ride. I had worked there and loved the town, so I said sure, I would go. I had gone to San Francisco many times, usually leaving early in the morning so as to arrive there for lunch. That's what we did that time. We left around 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. Lionel suggested that two other men should go along. At that time I did not know these men's names. The only time I found out the name of one of them was Leech was after his testimony was publicized. The Leech man said, "We will take your car and you ride with Lionel and the other man, in Lionel's car." The two men took the station wagon. That part of the story in which Mr. Leech says the car was wrecked and taken to Merced, and so forth, is true. In the meantime, I was in this car with Mr. Stander. On the way to San Francisco, I was sitting in the back seat, and fell asleep once or twice. The general tone of the conversation which I heard, however, began to leave me a little suspicious. Then, as we entered San Francisco, the man in the front seat pulled an envelope with some papers in it out of his pocket, and leaned over the front seat and handed it to me and said, "Stick those down between the seat in the back of the car." I didn't like that. I also gathered there was going to be some kind of meeting. I didn't attend that meeting, nor have I ever been in Sacramento in my life. I got to San Francisco, determined I would not see these people again. I registered in the Fairmont Hotel, and the following

day they called me to tell me my car was wrecked. I saw Lionel Stander that day, and perhaps the other man was with him—I don't remember about that. That was the end of my association with these men. I don't remember Leech being at the party I spoke of, at which this lecturer, Mr. Jacobs, was giving his talk.

Mr. VELDE. You did attend that meeting, did you not?

Miss MUIR. You mean in San Francisco?

Mr. VELDE. No, the one where the lecture was given by Mr. Jacobs.

Miss MUIR. I did attend that one; yes.

Mr. KUNZIG. And you did know Mr. Leech?

Miss MUIR. Yes. I met him that one night, and that was all. That one night.

Mr. KUNZIG. Either before or since?

Miss MUIR. That's right, to the best of my knowledge. He says he was there at that party, but I don't remember that fact.

Mr. VELDE. Do you recall any of the other people at that meeting?

Miss MUIR. I remember another party in the house of Dorothy Parker, or Tess Schlessinger. They are all the ones I remember.

Mr. VELDE. In what city?

Miss MUIR. Los Angeles, Calif.

Mr. VELDE. You don't recall anyone else present at that particular meeting?

Miss MUIR. No, I don't. I am sorry.

Mr. VELDE. Do you recall the date of it? In what year?

Miss MUIR. It was after this accident to my car, and it was at the same time I was studying at the University of Southern California, where I studied English and economics. There was a Dean McClune, I believe. That would perhaps have been in the year of 1936 or the beginning of 1937.

Mr. VELDE. Proceed with your questions, please, Mr. Counsel.

Mr. KUNZIG. The rest of the Leech testimony refers to this same specific incident you have already discussed, and you have given your full knowledge of that incident concerning the trip to San Francisco. Is that the sum total of your knowledge?

Miss MUIR. Yes.

Mr. KUNZIG. Now, I want to ask you about Lionel Stander. You have stated you were not a member of the Communist Party. Do you know whether Mr. Stander was a Communist, or active in Communist organizations?

Miss MUIR. At the time when I first met him I didn't know of it, until this incident of which I told you.

Mr. KUNZIG. Roughly, what period of time would that be?

Miss MUIR. This was the night of the accident. From then on I started to steer clear of him, and my only association with him was at the Spanish Loyalist auction which I referred to earlier.

Mr. KUNZIG. Why did you begin to steer clear of him?

Miss MUIR. Because I didn't like that trip to San Francisco. It sounded very suspicious and mysterious to me, like sticking those papers down the back of the seat, and realizing some kind of meeting was to be held, and how they were talking all night about various things. It sounded to me entirely too mysterious.

Mr. KUNZIG. Give us a little example.

Miss MUIR. Well, the Salinas lettuce strike was on at the time, and they were talking about it a great deal, and being very vicious against the management, and talking of how the management had handled it,

and how the poor strikers were being mistreated. Looking, it seemed to me, at only one side of the picture, and this didn't seem right to me. That is one example. There was a series of them, over the period of 8 to 10 hours we were driving.

Mr. KUNZIG. Did you come to know and believe, or have the impression that Lionel Stander was a Communist sympathizer?

Miss MUIR. I gathered enough to have that suspicion that he was a Communist sympathizer. I never knew whether he was a Communist or not, or a member of the party.

Mr. KUNZIG. Since you were in Hollywood, and knew a great many people there at that time, can you testify here to the fact that it was more or less general knowledge that Lionel Stander was a Communist sympathizer—in and around Hollywood?

Miss MUIR. I think I could testify to that; yes. He was certainly known to back all the organizations that later were proved to be front organizations.

Mr. VELDE. Miss Muir, who handed the papers you have previously described back to you, to be pushed down between the seats?

Miss MUIR. I don't know what his name was.

Mr. VELDE. But Mr. Stander was present?

Miss MUIR. Mr. Stander was in the front seat, driving the car.

Mr. VELDE. Did you examine the papers?

Miss MUIR. No. I just stuck the envelope down between the seats. They were in a regular envelope. I could tell it had papers in it, but they were quite thin. I just stuck it down between the seats like he told me to.

Mr. VELDE. Do you have any idea what the general subject matter of those papers could have been?

Miss MUIR. I gathered the impression they were some kind of report to this meeting that was taking place.

Mr. VELDE. What meeting?

Miss MUIR. There was going to be a meeting in San Francisco. I didn't know it was to be a meeting of the Communist Party.

Mr. KUNZIG. Was it to be a meeting of the Communist Party?

Miss MUIR. I guess it was. I just gathered that from the fact that he asked me to hide the papers, and from the way they were talking. I think there was something in Leech's testimony that says there was a meeting in San Francisco.

Mr. VELDE. Did you gather the impression during the period of the 10-hour ride that they were planning to attend a secret meeting in San Francisco?

Miss MUIR. I gathered that impression; yes.

Mr. VELDE. And you also gathered it was to be a secret meeting of members of the Communist Party, or some organization connected with the Communist Party?

Miss MUIR. I gathered that from the conversation; yes, but it was not told to me in so many words.

(Off record discussion takes place between members, witness, and counsel.)

Mr. KUNZIG. Miss Muir, the testimony of John L. Leech was resumed on Wednesday, July 17, 1940, and a portion of his testimony is as follows:

Mr. STEDMAN. Now, did you ever meet with Jean Muir?

Mr. LEECH. Yes, sir.

Mr. STEDMAN. Did you ever collect any money for the party from Miss Muir?

Mr. LEECH. Not as an individual.

Mr. STEDMAN. But have you done so for the party?

Mr. LEECH. No; I personally never have collected any. My representative, Stanley Lawrence, has collected money from Jean Muir for the Communist Party.

Mr. STEDMAN. In your presence?

Mr. LEECH. In my presence; yes.

Mr. STEDMAN. How much money was it? Do you recall the amount?

Mr. LEECH. I believe Miss Muir had promised a regular amount of \$75 a month to the Communist Party. And I remember one occasion particularly during the the 1936 election campaign, when she contributed some several hundred dollars.

Miss Muir, is that a correct statement? Did you contribute money to the Communist Party?

Miss MUIR. No. During this period my grandfather in New York was handling my business accounts. I was earning, surprisingly enough for a so-called star, \$350 a week. My grandfather would not allow me any money, except the amounts which he gave me for petty cash and things I had to get for the household, and stuff like that. He was very strict with me. It would have been impossible for me to get that amount of money from him, under any pretext or ruse. But the fact remains, even if my grandfather had not been handling my accounts, I would never have contributed them money.

Mr. KUNZIG. Is it your testimony, then, that Mr. Leech's testimony regarding your contributing money, is false?

Miss MUIR. Yes.

Mr. KUNZIG. To your knowledge, did you ever give money to the Communist Party?

Miss MUIR. No.

Mr. KUNZIG. Did you know Stanley Lawrence?

Miss MUIR. No. I think somebody mentioned his name. The only way I could possibly have been said to know him was that it might have been he was one of the two men in the car, or else the man in the car with me and Mr. Stander, the night of the accident.

Mr. KUNZIG. Did you know Seymour Robbins?

Miss MUIR. No.

Mr. KUNZIG. Did you know Seymour Robbins and Stanley Lawrence were one and the same person?

Miss MUIR. No.

Mr. KUNZIG. Miss Muir, one further incident: In 1946, March 14, there was a full-page ad in the New York Times, on page 18, put out by the Citizens United To Abolish the Wood-Rankin Committee. You were listed there as a supporter. Do you recall that, and were you a supporter of this group?

Miss MUIR. I think I was. I was not a great admirer of Mr. Rankin's, with all due respect to his position in Congress.

Mr. KUNZIG. Could that be why your attitude with regard to the Rankin committee, and your attitude previously expressed here this morning with respect to the present Committee on Un-American Activities, are entirely opposite? Or was this caused by a change in your attitude over the years?

Miss MUIR. Yes. In the first place, there are different people running this committee.

Mr. KUNZIG. But the purpose of the committee, of which you now express approval, was the same then as it is now. The United States Congress set up the committee then, and it was for the same purpose then as it is now.

Miss MUIR. I think there is a great difference, though, for this reason. That committee seemed to be pretty rough on people, and this committee has shown courtesy, certainly the greatest courtesy to me, and great cooperation. I would still be against a raving, ranting and witchburning kind of committee. This committee is not doing that. It is doing educational work as well as the work of investigation. It is educating the people to the dangers of communism, and I always felt the other committee was out mainly for mere personal publicity.

Mr. VELDE. Miss Muir, I want to set forth for the record, at this point, that while I don't agree with everything Mr. Rankin said and did, or even with Congressman Wood, who was the previous chairman of this committee, I do think as far as subversive activities are concerned, they were generally doing a laudable job in exposing the Communist menace in this country. In those days, and I include the chairmanship of Mr. Martin Dies, our present colleague from Texas, it was rather difficult to convince the people that there was a Communist conspiracy in this country. The methods they used in exposing the Communist menace may have seemed cruel and a little bit vicious during that period of time, especially to people who were following Communist-front groups; however, since time has passed, and it has been shown that in the great majority of cases when this committee, or its predecessors, cited an organization as being a Communist-front group or as a subversive-front group, usually they were proved to be right.

In view of what I have said, I wonder if you would make a general statement, for the benefit of the committee, telling the members what happened to you during the late thirties and forties when you became in some way attached to the various organizations? Just what were your feelings at that time, and what are your feelings now, with regard to these organizations?

Miss MUIR. I think there are three reasons why I somehow became attached to these organizations.

First was the Spanish Loyalist movement, which attitude I have explained already.

Another was because of the overwhelming problem of the colored citizens in our country, and

Third, was my great respect and admiration for the late President Roosevelt. All the way through I joined these groups and organizations, which are now cited as front groups, for those three purposes.

I did not inquire too much about the organizations, which I feel now was lax of me, but it was not unpatriotic. Maybe they used me as a dupe. I feel now that perhaps they did. Now that I won't do what they tell me to do, after I got out from under their influence, and I have made these statements as I said before, I believe that they really are going to throw me to the wolves.

Mr. KUNZIG. Who is "they," Miss Muir?

Miss MUIR. The Communist Party. The only people in this country who are as vicious as that. This is just supposition on my part, but I believe it is true.

Now, as to my attitude, my present attitude toward these organizations, I think there are only two in which I would still be interested.

One concerns the telegram which I sent to the Moscow Art Theater, and the second is the Southern Conference for Human Welfare. If

they were to be set up without the Communist Party being involved, I mean.

Mr. VELDE. That is a very important point you made there. If you realized at the present time, Miss Muir, that the Southern Conference for Human Welfare was controlled by the Communist Party, certainly you would not sponsor such an organization in any way, shape, or form?

Miss MUIR. No; I would not.

Mr. VELDE. But if it were organized at the present time, as it, in your opinion was originally organized, you would still support such an organization?

Miss MUIR. I would support any organization that was for the purpose of helping with the Negro problem, and helping the South solve their problem without actually butting in on the South, as so many have done.

Mr. VELDE. Now, as to the organization to abolish the Wood-Rankin committee, would you proceed a little bit further on that, Mr. Counsel?

(Off record discussion between counsel, members, and witness.)

Mr. KUNZIG. From the sum total of your opinions, gleaned from your testimony this morning, I take it you feel communism represents a danger to the country, and is something abhorrent to you and to be fought against with all the fight democracies can command?

Miss MUIR. I do feel that, yes. I would like to give one incident of my proof of that. I appeared as an actress in the very anti-Communist documentary radio show done over a national network. It was the first anti-Communist show that had been done that I know of.

Mr. KUNZIG. And when was that?

Miss MUIR. In 1944 or 1945.

(Off record discussion between witness and counsel.)

Miss MUIR. I would like to be able to fight communism in my own small way, as much as I can. That is the main reason I am here, as I hope I may be able in this way to help the committee.

Mr. VELDE. Miss Muir, and also Mr. Jaffe, the committee certainly thanks you for coming before it voluntarily to give your testimony. I want to say that you have added a great deal to the voluminous information we have concerning the Communist-front activities in this country, and we especially appreciate the fact that you have given this information relative to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare and the telegram to Moscow, because I personally feel you are sincere in your belief that those were good organizations, and would have remained so if they had not become dominated by the Communist Party.

Miss MUIR. Mr. Chairman, may I say something to correct a statement I previously made? The telegram I sent to the Moscow Art Theater was not sent through an organization. It was just a telegram I sent over the telephone, and had nothing to do with an organization.

(Off record discussion takes place between witness, members, and counsel.)

Mr. KUNZIG. Before this hearing is closed, Miss Muir, is there any further information you can add, on your own part, which you feel would be of help to this committee?

Miss MUIR. Yes, Mr. Kunzig. In 1947 a person who had been connected with the ICC several years before that called me and asked me whether I would give a party for Lester Cole. Now when I went out to Hollywood, I was very young, very scared and very shy. Lester Cole was a writer at that time, on the lot at Warner Bros., and was very kind to me. He took me to lunch, and took me to dinner, and never made a pass at me, which would have frightened me to death, and was always a perfect gentleman, kind and gentlemanly to me at all times, and gave me a great deal of self-confidence. I used to see him on the lot and as I say, had lunch and dinner with him once or twice, so when this call came, I am afraid I didn't stop to think. It was going to be a party for someone who had been kind to me. I was not told that it was to raise money.

Mr. KUNZIG. For what purpose did they raise money?

Miss MUIR. It must have been for the Hollywood Ten.

Mr. VELDE. Who was the one who contacted you?

Miss MUIR. Sheelagh Kennedy, and a girl by the name of Belle Multhaven. She was connected with the ICC.

Mr. VELDE. The ICC was what?

Miss MUIR. The Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions. I think there were about 25 or 30 people there at the party.

Mr. KUNZIG. When was this, and where was it held?

Miss MUIR. It was held at our home at 10 West 86th Street, New York City. I was busy in the kitchen with the canapes and getting the cocktails ready to serve, and such things as that. I came out of the kitchen, and was very shocked to hear them making a plea for money, because I had never done that in our home. We have never allowed our home to be used for that purpose.

Mr. KUNZIG. This money was to be used for the defense of Mr. Cole?

Miss MUIR. Yes. My husband came home later from the office that night, and I told him about it. I don't think anyone was left at that time. Yes, Adelaide Bean was still there. She was connected with the ICC. John Randolph I do not remember, but he must have been there as he said he made a speech.

(Off record discussion between witness, her counsel, and members.)

Mr. VELDE. Did you know whether John Randolph was connected with the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions?

Miss MUIR. No; he wasn't connected with the ICC. I didn't even know what he looked like. I couldn't have known him very well. I don't think I ever really met him, excepting once at that party, and I don't even remember that.

Mr. VELDE. This person, whether it was Sheelagh Kennedy or Belle Multhaven—did they have anything to do with selecting your guest list?

Miss MUIR. Yes; they did the whole thing.

Mr. VELDE. In other words, did they do the telephoning, or write the invitations?

Miss MUIR. Yes. It was done in quite a hurry, over about 3 days' time. It was on a Thursday afternoon. I guess they must have done the inviting by telephone, or by wire.

Mr. VELDE. Miss Muir, is there anything further you can tell this committee relative to subversive activities in the entertainment field which would be valuable to us?

Miss MUIR. I don't think so. I think I have told you everything I know.

Mr. VELDE. If something does come to your mind in the future, will you be willing to contact counsel or an investigator of this committee, and give us the information?

Miss MUIR. I am not only willing, I want to, and I will.

Mr. VELDE. Thank you very kindly, Miss Muir, for the cooperation you have given this committee, and for the service you have rendered to your country. If there is nothing further which you wish to ask Miss Muir, Mr. Counsel, she will be excused.

Mr. KUNZIG. I have nothing further to ask Miss Muir, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. VELDE. Then you are excused, Miss Muir, and the hearing is adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 12:45 p. m., Monday, June 15, 1953, the executive hearing adjourned, pursuant to further call of the Chair.)

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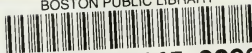
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