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INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN THE
LOS ANGELES, CALIF., AREA—PART 11

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
EIGHTY-FOURTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

DECEMBER 16, 1953, JUNE 6, AND JULY 5, 1956

Printed for the use of the Committee on Un-American Activities

(INCLUDING INDEX)



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COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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¹ Ordered released by the committee.

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 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

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

* * * * *

(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.

(b) The Committee on Un-American Activities, as a whole or by subcommittee, is authorized to make from time to time, investigations of (1) the extent, character, and objects of un-American propaganda activities in the United States, (2) 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 (3) all other questions in relation thereto that would aid Congress in any necessary remedial legislation.

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INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN THE LOS ANGELES, CALIF., AREA—Part 11

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1953

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,
Los Angeles, Calif.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ¹

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met, pursuant to call, at 10 a. m., in room G-41, Federal Building, Los Angeles, Calif., Hon. Donald L. Jackson (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives Donald L. Jackson and Clyde Doyle, both of California.

Staff member present: William A. Wheeler, investigator.

Mr. JACKSON. The committee will be in order.

Will you raise your right hand Mr. Fielding?

Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give to this subcommittee shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. FIELDING. I do.

Mr. JACKSON. Be seated, please.

Let the record show that for the purposes of this hearing this morning, and under the authority of Public Law 601, the chairman of the committee, Mr. Velde, of Illinois, has appointed a subcommittee of two consisting of Mr. Doyle and Mr. Jackson, as chairman. Also, in pursuance of the provisions of Public Law 601 the committee has caused to be subpoenaed the witness who is here this morning for the purpose of determining what, if any, information the witness may have in his possession which may be of help to the committee in proposing to the Congress such remedial legislation as may be considered desirable.

Proceed, Mr. Wheeler.

TESTIMONY OF JERRY FIELDING, ACCOMPANIED BY COUNSEL HELD & BROOKS

Mr. WHEELER. Will the witness state his full name, please?

Mr. FIELDING. My name is Jerry Fielding.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you represented by counsel?

Mr. FIELDING. Yes, sir; I am.

Mr. WHEELER. Would counsel please identify themselves for the record?

¹ Ordered released by the committee September 4, 1956.

Mr. HELD. If the committee please, this witness is represented by Held & Brooks, of Beverly Hills, Arthur A. Brooks, Jr., and Benjamin Held.

Mr. WHEELER. The witness is appearing here this morning in response to a subpoena?

Mr. FIELDING. Yes, sir; I am.

Mr. WHEELER. Where do you presently reside, Mr. Fielding?

Mr. FIELDING. I reside in Los Angeles.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you give us a brief résumé of your educational background?

Mr. FIELDING. I was educated in the public schools and high schools of Pittsburgh, Pa. I did not attend the university.

Mr. WHEELER. When and where were you born?

Mr. FIELDING. I was born in 1922 in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you mind giving us the month?

Mr. FIELDING. June.

Mr. WHEELER. And the day?

Mr. FIELDING. 17th.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you give us a résumé of your employment background since leaving school?

Mr. FIELDING. Well, I have been employed as an arranger, composer, and conductor in the dance-band field and in the field of radio and television.

Mr. WHEELER. What is your present occupation?

Mr. FIELDING. I am a composer, arranger, and conductor.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you presently employed?

Mr. FIELDING. Yes, sir; I am.

Mr. WHEELER. And by whom?

Mr. FIELDING. I am presently employed by the National Broadcasting Co.

Mr. WHEELER. Mr. Fielding, are you acquainted with a person by the name of Judy Raymond?

Mr. FIELDING. Well, sir, I respectfully decline to answer that question, and I base my declination on the grounds of the fifth amendment of the Constitution.

Mr. WHEELER. Mr. Chairman, Judith Raymond testified before the committee in executive session on September 11, 1953. In the course of her testimony she testified to the effect that she joined the Communist Party in the late spring of 1945 and severed her relationship with the party in the early part of 1949. I refer to page 26 of her testimony.

In the course of her testimony she related to the committee the group of the Communist Party to which she was assigned, and in identifying the individuals who were members of this group:

Mr. WHEELER. Do you recall the names of the other members of this group?

Miss RAYMOND. I have some of them.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you relate the ones you do recall, and also identify them as to their occupation or any other pertinent information that you may have concerning them?

Miss RAYMOND. Muni Diamond; Bill Wolff, a radio writer; Jack and Mary Robinson, radio writers; Gene Stone, a radio writer and partner of Jack Robinson; Angela Clarke, actress; Reuben Ship, radio writer; Jerry and Ann Fielding—Jerry is a musician and composer for radio.

Would you like to comment on this testimony, Mr. Fielding?

MR. FIELDING. Well, sir, I would like to state that I am not a member of the Communist Party or any other affiliated or unaffiliated political organization.

With regard to Miss—to the witness' testimony, I respectfully decline any further comment on the basis of the fifth amendment.

MR. WHEELER. Were you a member of the Communist Party in 1952?

MR. FIELDING. I respectfully decline on the same grounds.

MR. WHEELER. Do I understand you state you are not a member of the Communist Party today; is that correct?

MR. FIELDING. I stated that I am not a member of the Communist Party.

MR. WHEELER. Were you a member of the Communist Party on December 15, 1953? That was yesterday.

MR. FIELDING. I decline to answer that question, sir, on the grounds of the fifth amendment.

MR. WHEELER. Were you a member of a radio group of the Communist Party, as described by Judith Raymond?

MR. FIELDING. I decline to answer that question on the same grounds.

MR. WHEELER. Are you acquainted with Muni Diamond?

MR. FIELDING. I decline to answer that question on the same grounds.

MR. WHEELER. Mr. Fielding, do you know William Alland?

MR. FIELDING. I decline to answer that question, sir, on the same grounds.

MR. WHEELER. That is the fifth amendment?

MR. FIELDING. The fifth amendment.

MR. WHEELER. Mr. Chairman, Mr. William Alland appeared before the committee in executive session on November 23, 1953, and admitted prior Communist Party membership in the Hollywood area, testifying that he was a member of the radio branch of the Communist Party.

And referring to page 54, Mr. Alland testified in response to Mr. Tavenner's questions:

MR. TAVENNER. I think it would be well at this point to tell the committee who were members of this radio group, and in doing so describe their position and activity in the party as well as you can; and also which of them made the effort to have the meeting set at a time convenient to you and made an effort to bring you back into the Communist Party.

MR. ALLAND. Well, the radio branch consisted of Pauline Hopkins, Sam Moore, Reuben Ship, Mike Davidson, Virginia Mullen, Stanley Waxman, Jerry Fielding, Gene Stone, Jack and Mary Robinson.

Would you like to comment on the testimony of Mr. Alland?

MR. FIELDING. I decline to comment on the testimony of Mr. Alland on the grounds of the fifth amendment. However, I will state again that I am not a member of the Communist Party.

MR. WHEELER. Mr. Chairman, I see no reason to pursue this further.

MR. JACKSON. Mr. Doyle?

MR. DOYLE. May I ask, Mr. Wheeler, to what year were you referring when Mr. Fielding was a member in that group?

MR. WHEELER. Mr. Alland testified that he left the party in January or February 1949, and that was the last group to which he was assigned. So it would be in the year 1948.

MR. DOYLE. I will state this, Mr. Fielding, in asking you these questions: I noticed you pledged your constitutional privilege in not

naming anyone, whether or not you knew then, and I can understand that.

But, naturally, when you state you are not now a member of the Communist Party, in view of the sworn testimony that we have that you were several years ago a member of the Communist Party, I will state frankly I don't intend to ask you as to who was a member of the Communist Party with you in 1948 and 1949 or 1947, or when you were, if you were.

I think, to be fair with you, the form of your answer makes me infer that there was a time when you were a member of the Communist Party. Now, this committee is in search, also, of any recommendation that it might receive from any American citizen as to their thinking in terms of legislation dealing with the subversives. You understand my statement? We are looking for recommendations from patriotic citizens, thinking citizens, to help us understand their views regarding the field of legislation dealing with subversives.

Now, whether or not you ever came in touch with any subversive activities any place, either in the group identified or any other group, have you any suggestion to make to us, Mr. Fielding, in that field?

In other words, this is a subcommittee of Congress. Have you any suggestion to make to us? I have never met you in my life, I am sure, and never talked with you. I don't know what your answer may be. But I am just asking you in good faith, have you any suggestion for us, young man? You have an important employment; have you any suggestion to make to us as a congressional committee?

Mr. FIELDING. May I say, Congressman, that I have always been and do consider myself a good citizen of this country and a law-abiding citizen. My profession is the music business. I have no recommendations to offer this committee as to legislation on the matters which you mentioned.

The Congressman stated that there was an inference in his question, and I believe there is. And for that reason I have to decline further comment on this question on the grounds of the fifth amendment.

Mr. DOYLE. I know Mr. Jackson would join me in making one further comment to you as a young man. We hope the time will come before too long when, without your feeling any of your conscientious objections, you will come to the point where you, as a young American, will voluntarily say to some constituted authority, whether it is this committee or not, "I want to help you understand the problem of subversive activity in my country to the extent that I am able."

One further comment, Mr. Fielding: I feel rather strongly that some of you young men and women who—again I will infer because of the form of your answer, I will infer you were at one time a member of the Communist Party, whether yesterday you withdrew or 2 years ago you withdrew—but there was a time, I infer, when you were a member of the Communist Party.

Now, if that is true, and we have sworn testimony by plenty of witnesses that it is true, I want to urge you to get to the point where, as a patriotic American citizen, you can conscientiously say to the constituted law, "I may not be in a position to give you names of other men and women who were in the Communist Party with me, but I am now in a position to tell you what I know about that whole problem."

Again, I am not obviating the possibility that you will get to the point where you will feel that the safety of your Nation, against the Communist conspiracy, will call upon you to help your Government even by relating names of former associates in the Communist Party if and when you were in it; and I hope that time will come.

I am not suggesting that you violate your conscientious scruples. But I have come to the point in my experience where I think there cannot be too many conscientious scruples when we face up to the fact of our own internal security as against the well-known subversive Communist conspiracy to use force and violence. I am not inferring that you advocated that, young fellow.

It is fair for me to say that you—I am not inferring that you are advocating that philosophy, but I am saying to you that some top men and women in America, at the time you were a member of the Communist Party, if you were, at that time did advocate, and still advocate, force and violence in connection with their contemplated revolution.

I am not taking advantage of you to preach to you; believe me. But I do hope—and I am not criticizing your counsel in whatever way he advised you to answer, either—but I am saying that I hope you will get to the point where you can put the first thing first, which I believe is the internal security of your own Nation.

That is all, Mr. Jackson.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Fielding, were you a member of the Communist Party when you entered the hearing room this morning?

Mr. FIELDING. I decline to answer that on the grounds of the fifth amendment. However, sir, I will state again—I will state that I am not a member of the Communist Party.

Mr. JACKSON. Will you be a member of the Communist Party when you leave this conference room?

Mr. FIELDING. I have no intention of joining the Communist Party, Mr. Congressman.

Mr. JACKSON. Why have you no intention of joining the Communist Party?

Mr. FIELDING. As I stated before to Congressman Doyle, sir, I have been a very busy musician and I intend to continue to be one; and I do not contemplate any organized political activity.

Mr. JACKSON. Did you in the past contemplate such organized political activity?

Mr. FIELDING. Well, sir, I decline to answer that on the grounds of the fifth amendment.

Mr. JACKSON. Any reason why the witness should not be excused?

Mr. WHEELER. No.

Mr. JACKSON. The witness is excused and released from the subpoena.

INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN THE LOS ANGELES, CALIF., AREA—Part 11

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1956

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,
Los Angeles, Calif.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ¹

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a. m., in room 484 of the Statler Hotel, Los Angeles, Calif., Hon. Clyde Doyle (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives Doyle and Jackson.

Staff member present: William A. Wheeler, investigator.

Mr. DOYLE. The subcommittee will come to order.

Let the record show that, for the purpose of this hearing and under authority of Public Law 601, Francis E. Walter, chairman of the full committee, has designated Mr. Morgan M. Moulder, of Missouri; Mr. Donald L. Jackson, of California; and Mr. Clyde Doyle, of California, presiding, as a subcommittee of three. Mr. Jackson and myself, Mr. Doyle, are present. The hearing will proceed.

Mr. WHEELER. The first witness is Miss Judith Poska.

Mr. DOYLE. Will you please be sworn?

Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give to this subcommittee shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Miss POSKA. I do.

TESTIMONY OF JUDITH POSKA

Mr. WHEELER. Will you state your name, please?

Miss POSKA. Judith Poska.

Mr. WHEELER. Where were you born, Miss Poska?

Miss POSKA. I was born in Montana—Utica.

Mr. JACKSON. May I, Mr. Chairman, ask a question at this point?

I notice the witness is not accompanied by counsel. It is the practice of the committee to allow witnesses to be accompanied by counsel if the witness so desires, and I should like to have it appear in the record that you have been informed of this fact and also to inquire whether or not you desire counsel.

Miss POSKA. Well, I didn't because I can only tell the truth.

Mr. JACKSON. Very well; but I felt it should appear in the record that you have the privilege of counsel if you so desire.

¹ Ordered released by the committee August 7, 1956.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DOYLE. I think that is well, Mr. Jackson.

Are you perfectly willing to go ahead and testify?

Miss POSKA. Oh, certainly.

Mr. WHEELER. You are appearing as a voluntary witness; is that correct?

Miss POSKA. I am; that is right.

Mr. WHEELER. What is your educational background?

Miss POSKA. I graduated from public school in Seattle.

And I went into the Curtis Institute of Music when I was 12, and I had private tutors there. I studied French and English and things that go along with when you are young and you are taken out of public school; when you concentrate on a profession or a career, why, they have you study, make up your studies. You study English and that sort of thing.

Mr. WHEELER. The Curtis Institute—

Miss POSKA. Is a musical institute, a school of music; yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you a musician by occupation?

Miss POSKA. Yes; I am.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you pursuing that occupation at the present time?

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Miss Poska, during our hearings here in Los Angeles beginning on the 16th of April a former member of the Communist Party, Don Christlieb, stated in the course of his testimony that he knew you as a member of the Communist Party. Now, subsequent to his identification of you, I believe you became aware of his identification and notified the committee by telegram that you had not been a member of the Communist Party; and I contacted you on the basis of that telegram.

Miss POSKA. That is right.

Mr. WHEELER. And you desire to come before the committee and straighten out the record?

Miss POSKA. That is correct.

Mr. WHEELER. Will you proceed with what you wish to say.

Miss POSKA. What you say is absolutely true.

It was during the war and I think Russia had been in the war, oh, I don't know how long; but, anyway, all of us, all of my friends and myself included, were very anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist; and playing around, why, I heard a lot of talk about the Marxist theory and how valiant the Russians were, and so on and so forth; and I didn't know from nothing about Marx or the Russian Revolution—I knew that it had occurred—so I thought it would be interesting, out of curiosity, to find out what Marx had to offer, what his theory was; because everyone was talking about it, and I seemed rather stupid to me.

Anyway, subsequently Mischa Altman contacted me and invited me to go to meetings. Of course, at that time the Communist Party was a recognized party, it was on the ballot, et cetera; nothing was thought about it.

However, I went to a few—I can't remember how many I went to because I didn't go regularly, for which they were pretty upset at me, plus the fact that when I did go to a meeting I never knew my

lesson. I had other things to do, I wasn't married, and if I wanted to go out on a date, I went regardless of the meeting; and they wanted to know why I wasn't there and where—I figured it wasn't any of their business. I was free, white, and 21; and I was going to—I didn't think that I should be regimented, and I didn't like regimentation.

Mr. JACKSON. Would you place this in the context of a time? What was the time period?

Miss POSKA. You know, I don't remember. It must have been 1942 or 1943.

Mr. WHEELER. If I may intercede for a moment, the records of the Communist Party of Los Angeles County show that she was a member of the beginners' class in the year 1944.

Miss POSKA. Was it then 1944?

Mr. WHEELER. If that would help clarify it.

Mr. JACKSON. Yes. I wanted to place this in its proper time period.

Miss POSKA. It was long ago and I had forgotten it, and I wasn't enough interested to—you know, so it was 1944. So I was—I was there, and I didn't go to meetings regularly, and I was reprimanded and I didn't like it; and being religious—I am not fanatical; but I go to church, and I like to go; if I want to go, I go; if I don't want to go, I don't go.

But, by the same token, I don't want someone to tell me not to go, any more than I want someone to tell me I am to go. I am free, and when my basic liberties are jeopardized, I don't like it at all.

Mr. WHEELER. You were criticized for going to church by this group of people?

Miss POSKA. Well, it wasn't recommended. I mean, it wasn't the thing to do, you know. They frowned upon it.

Mr. WHEELER. When I interviewed you last month there was some doubt in your mind whether you actually joined the Communist Party.

Miss POSKA. To my knowledge, I didn't. I must have, but if they have me down maybe I signed something. If I did, I certainly wasn't aware of it at the time. That is how stupid I was.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you pay dues?

Miss POSKA. No; I didn't. That is one thing, I was supposed to give—I don't know how much, a certain percentage, I don't know exactly the percentage of everything I made; and I inquired as to why. Well, it went into the party.

Mr. JACKSON. Who instructed you that you were supposed to give a certain portion of your earnings?

Miss POSKA. Well, if I remember, Altman. He was always at the meetings.

Mr. JACKSON. How did you meet Mr. Altman?

Miss POSKA. He was a musician, and we worked together a long, long, time ago when I first came to Los Angeles. I had known him for many years.

Mr. JACKSON. When would that have been?

Miss POSKA. I first came to Los Angeles in 1932. I had been here about a year when I met him, I believe; but I have to give him A for effort. They really worked on me, but the more they worked on me the less I liked it.

Mr. WHEELER. How many meetings would you say you attended?

MISS POSKA. Mr. Wheeler, I don't remember. I might have gone to a dozen, I might have gone to 10. I really—there weren't too many.

MR. WHEELER. Would you say you were connected with this group for a period of 6 months or less?

MISS POSKA. I'd say 6 months, maybe. Maximum, 6 months.

MR. WHEELER. Over that period of time, did you attend approximately 12 meetings?

MISS POSKA. Well, I'd say. I never did keep track, but it could have been very easily.

MR. WHEELER. Mr. Doyle, I have no further questions concerning the activities of this witness.

MR. DOYLE. Do you, Mr. Jackson?

MR. JACKSON. Yes.

I should like to discuss the meetings a little further. Where were the meetings held which you attended?

MISS POSKA. They were always at a different place in a private—someone's private home.

MR. JACKSON. Whose home?

MISS POSKA. That I don't even remember, because they were always in someone's—some different person's place. They weren't musicians, because that I would remember. We were never at Christlieb's house. I think once we went to Altman's place—we met at Altman's place; and I don't even remember where he was living at the time. I do remember very distinctly that I was supposed to go to one place and I got lost. It was quite far away from where I was living, and I finally gave up and went home. I was disgusted with the whole business.

MR. JACKSON. During your attendance at these 8 or 10 meetings, who else attended these meetings, in addition to yourself?

MISS POSKA. As a rule, Altman was always there, Christlieb some of the time, and then they were made up of, not musicians, but, oh, there would be radio actors and people from the arts and sciences in the different fields; maybe one would be a photographer. I know that once—oh, do you remember I told you who was there, a writer in these very well—John Howard Lawson was there at one meeting.

MR. JACKSON. And who else?

MISS POSKA. As I say, there were always very different, as a rule a different group, and I couldn't name you them because I don't remember, and they weren't musicians.

MR. JACKSON. You attended 8 or 10 or 12 meetings over a period of some months, during which time, and to the best of your knowledge, you can remember only Mr. Lawson and Mr. Altman and Mr. Christlieb?

MISS POSKA. Yes; and I think once or twice Mrs. Christlieb was there.

MR. JACKSON. How were you notified as to where you were to go to these meetings? How did you receive word on that?

MISS POSKA. Either Altman—usually Altman called me, or I think once or twice Christlieb called me.

MR. JACKSON. They would tell you that the meeting was to be held in such and such a person's house?

MISS POSKA. Such and such address.

Mr. JACKSON. Such and such address, and without further identification of whose address it was?

Miss POSKA. That is right.

Mr. JACKSON. And under the compulsion of your oath, are you prepared to say that you cannot now remember any other persons than the 3 you have named, or the 4, including Mrs. Christlieb?

Miss POSKA. Not by name, no, I can't. If I could, I certainly would tell you.

Mr. JACKSON. If not by name, can you identify any of these persons in any other way?

Miss POSKA. No, except that, as I say, I know that there would be an actor or sometimes I know that I would hear mention of photography and studio work, and they were from the—I take it for granted they were from the arts and sciences; but musicians, I never—the only ones that I saw I mentioned.

Mr. JACKSON. Did you know any of the actors?

Miss POSKA. They weren't well known, no. They weren't big names, because those I would remember.

Mr. JACKSON. When did you terminate your association with the Communist Party?

Miss POSKA. Well, I can't tell you exactly. It wasn't very long; I mean, that I stopped completely going to meetings. When I stopped going to meetings they stopped speaking to me, too.

Mr. JACKSON. Was any effort made to get you to return to the party?

Miss POSKA. No. No, they didn't. They just ignored me.

Mr. JACKSON. By "they," I suppose you mean the four persons you mentioned?

Miss POSKA. Christliebs and the Altmans.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Wheeler, is this substantially borne out by the Christlieb testimony?

Mr. WHEELER. Yes.

Mr. JACKSON. What is your present occupation?

Miss POSKA. I am a musician. I play my violin and I am also in the real-estate business.

Mr. JACKSON. Are you now engaged professionally in the music field?

Miss POSKA. Well, I do free-lance work. I am not under contract.

Mr. JACKSON. I have nothing more, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WHEELER. As the record stands, Miss Poska, I believe you do not deny that you were a member of the Communist Party, nor do you admit you were a member of the Communist Party. Is that correct?

Miss POSKA. To my knowledge I wasn't, but I must have been if they say that I was in the student class or the beginners' class or whatever it was.

Mr. WHEELER. It would stand to reason if they asked you for a percentage of your salary—

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. I mean, they must have considered you as a member of their group?

Miss POSKA. They must have.

Mr. DOYLE. May I ask this: Did you pay some percentage of your salary?

Miss POSKA. Oh, never a penny.

Mr. DOYLE. Did you ever distribute any literature in the group?

Miss POSKA. No; I didn't.

Mr. DOYLE. Or buy any literature?

Miss POSKA. No. Whatever literature I had, they gave me to read; which I never—

Mr. DOYLE. When you went to the meetings, with whom did you go?

Miss POSKA. I went by myself.

Mr. DOYLE. Did Mr. Lawson speak at that one meeting—if you remember?

Miss POSKA. Well, he sort of conducted the group.

Mr. DOYLE. What did you do to leave the group?

Miss POSKA. What did I do?

Mr. DOYLE. Yes.

Miss POSKA. I just quit going. I just stopped going to meetings.

Mr. DOYLE. Did Mr. Altman ask you to come back?

Miss POSKA. No, sir. They would tell me—they called me and would say, "Well, there is a meeting at such and such an address"; and I'd say, "Well, I don't think I can make it"; and I didn't go; and that was it.

Mr. DOYLE. They must have given you a membership card if they considered you a member.

Miss POSKA. No; I never got a membership card.

Mr. DOYLE. Did they give you any name other than your own to use?

Miss POSKA. No.

Mr. DOYLE. Do you have the testimony here of the person who identified her?

Mr. WHEELER. No, sir; I do not. It was transcribed by reporters from Washington, D. C., and taken to Washington, D. C.

I might mention, Mr. Doyle, that I have been advised that the records of the Communist Party disclose Miss Poska as a very unsatisfactory member. She was dropped by the Communist Party.

Mr. DOYLE. Can you help us to understand what there was about the Communist group that constrained you to leave it?

Miss POSKA. I don't like regimentation, Mr. Doyle, in any way, shape, or form. I don't like it and I won't have it. I am free and I am going to stay that way.

Mr. DOYLE. Did they discuss at any of the meetings at which you were present, the matter of the relationship between our own Nation and Russia? What was the discussion? That is, the different philosophies of government.

Miss POSKA. We were supposed to study Marx, and I was supposed to read it, and we were supposed to know our lessons when we went there; but I never knew mine, and it was—of course, it was anti-capitalist, and I couldn't see anything wrong with our capitalistic system. I think it, so far, is the best I know of.

Mr. DOYLE. Of course, you mentioned you never knew your lesson. Then you had a book on Marxism that you didn't study too much. You must have had a book for your lesson.

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. Did you buy that book?

Miss POSKA. No, sir.

Mr. DOYLE. How many books on Marxism were you supposed to read?

Miss POSKA. I don't know, but I never even got through that one because I wasn't interested.

Mr. DOYLE. I wonder, was there any discussion at all of our own Government?

Miss POSKA. No, not to my knowledge.

Mr. DOYLE. As compared with the Marxist theory?

Miss POSKA. No.

Mr. DOYLE. Any criticism of our form of Government?

Miss POSKA. No. I wouldn't say there was when I started—when I was going to the meetings. They always, of course, stressed, naturally, that the workers should—in Russia what they are, and we are a capitalistic system; and that was better, they thought; and that is where I parted company also.

Mr. DOYLE. On the matter of the literature; you say you do not know how many books on Marxism you had, but evidently you did not have your lesson in one of them?

Miss POSKA. I didn't have them in anything they gave me. After I quit going to meetings, I threw them in the incinerator.

Mr. DOYLE. But I am wondering, did you get into the realm of helping them; be the librarian?

Miss POSKA. No.

Mr. DOYLE. Or distribute any of the literature?

Miss POSKA. No.

Mr. DOYLE. By repute, I know generally they do that with a beginner.

Miss POSKA. No. I never—

Mr. DOYLE. Who was the treasurer of the group? There must have been someone who was announced as treasurer.

Miss POSKA. Altman, he was collecting. When anybody gave money for anything, why he collected it. They gave it to him.

Mr. DOYLE. Didn't Mr. and Mrs. Altman once in a while pick you up and go with you?

Miss POSKA. No, sir.

Mr. DOYLE. Or you with him?

Miss POSKA. No, sir.

Mr. DOYLE. Who, then, was the chairman of the group if Altman was the collector of dues? Who was the chairman of it?

Miss POSKA. Well, he conducted the meetings.

Mr. DOYLE. Mischa Altman did?

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. And he collected the money, too?

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. Generally who phoned you as to where the meeting was to be held?

Miss POSKA. It would be either Altman or Christlieb who would phone me.

Mr. DOYLE. Is Mr. Christlieb the one who identified the witness as a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. WHEELER. Yes, sir.

Mr. DOYLE. Did you just drop out or did you send a written resignation?

Miss POSKA. No, I just stopped. I just stopped going.

Mr. DOYLE. Did you ever see their filing system, card index, books, or records?

Miss POSKA. I never did, no.

Mr. DOYLE. How many members were in your group?

Miss POSKA. I don't know. At the meetings that I attended there wouldn't be more than 6 or 7. They were small.

Mr. DOYLE. Did the members participate in the discussion? You now were interested a little bit, at least. For instance, did you participate in the discussions, too, along with the rest of them?

Miss POSKA. No. I was a pretty good listener.

Mr. DOYLE. You did not have your lesson?

Miss POSKA. I didn't.

Mr. DOYLE. They criticized you because you did not have your lesson?

Miss POSKA. That is right.

Mr. DOYLE. So evidently you were expected to know your lesson?

Miss POSKA. I was. I was supposed to have my lesson and I didn't.

Mr. JACKSON. Were these meetings which you attended closed meetings, or did you have the impression that you were free to bring with you anyone you wanted to bring?

Miss POSKA. Well, I was never told that I could bring anyone and I never did take anyone; but I would—looking back on it, I would think that they were closed meetings.

Mr. JACKSON. I am not prompting you in this regard, but was it your impression that you could not simply have taken a friend with you to the meeting; is that a correct statement?

Miss POSKA. Well, that was—that would be the impression.

Mr. JACKSON. And at no time were you asked to contribute or to pay dues or to make any contribution?

Miss POSKA. Well, yes, I was expected to give a certain percentage of everything I made.

Mr. JACKSON. And this you did not do?

Miss POSKA. I certainly didn't.

Mr. JACKSON. Was this remonstrated about by Mr. Altman or any of the other members?

Miss POSKA. Well, when I inquired—you see, I always like to know where my money is going. When I inquired where it was going he said, "Well, to the Communist Party."

And I said, "What for?"

"Well," he said, "you are not supposed to ask."

I said, "I figure it is my money, it is my privilege to know." So I said, "I don't feel like it."

Mr. JACKSON. Have you followed the course of the recent hearings of this committee in Los Angeles?

Miss POSKA. Where the musicians were involved, I did.

Mr. JACKSON. Did you, during the course of those hearings, see the photograph or read the testimony of any person who was known to you either as a Communist or non-Communist?

Miss POSKA. Well, I wouldn't say—I couldn't say that anyone except Mr. Christlieb was to my knowledge a Communist.

Mr. JACKSON. Yes. Had you previously known any others who testified during the course of those hearings?

Miss POSKA. There were a lot of musicians who testified that I know; yes.

Mr. JACKSON. Did you know any of them to have been members of the Communist Party?

Miss POSKA. No. I was very amazed. I think I told you, Mr. Wheeler, that I was dumfounded at some of the names that I read, completely dumfounded.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as the witness is not accompanied by counsel, I should like to ask one more question.

Mr. DOYLE. Yes.

Mr. JACKSON. That is, whether or not you feel that your rights have been in any way abused by the subcommittee.

Miss POSKA. Here today?

Mr. JACKSON. Here today.

Miss POSKA. I should say not.

Mr. JACKSON. And whether you have been in any way intimidated?

Miss POSKA. Oh, no.

Mr. JACKSON. Or anything of that sort?

Miss POSKA. Oh, no.

Mr. JACKSON. We so frequently meet with that charge. We like to have it in the record. I think, as a matter of fact, you probably feel much better for having gotten it off your chest.

Miss POSKA. I certainly do. I am very happy to have come down here this morning.

Mr. JACKSON. I have no further questions.

Mr. DOYLE. Do you feel that Mr. Wheeler, our investigator, has been perfectly fair to you in his dealings with you?

Miss POSKA. He has been wonderful, and I consider him my friend.

Mr. JACKSON. We are glad to say that he is probably the man with the most "former Communist" friends of anyone we know.

Mr. WHEELER. I would like to ask if you have been to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Miss POSKA. Yes; I have.

Mr. DOYLE. I want to ask one more question.

One of the purposes of this committee under Public Law 601 is to try to find, from former Communists especially—

Miss POSKA. Oh, that stigma.

Mr. DOYLE. I asked it that way in view of your testimony, because you say you must have been, even though you don't remember technically being a member. Have you any suggestion to make to the Congress of the United States in the field of how to get at the subversive activities? Was there anything subversive discussed in your presence?

Miss POSKA. Never.

Mr. DOYLE. Not in any way?

Miss POSKA. No, there wasn't, Mr. Doyle, not a thing; because had there been, I would have been the first to go to the FBI, because we were at war and that was a very important thing to me. I have considered myself an American and a good one, and I shall always be; and anything subversive, believe me, I would be the first to—but nothing was ever subversive that was mentioned when I was going to meetings.

Mr. JACKSON. The phrase "former Communist" has been mentioned, and I think it should be on the record that the committee and the country owes a very great debt of gratitude to former Communists who have seen it as their duty to come forward and tell the committee and the country what they know about it, having honestly and decisively broken with the Communist Party.

So I do not, Mr. Chairman, consider that the term "former Communist" is anything but a term of approbation.

Mr. DOYLE. I remember your testimony that at the time you were in that group we were at war. All of the time that you were in the group was Russia our ally?

Miss POSKA. Yes, it was.

Mr. DOYLE. However at that same period of time the group was being instructed of the difference between the Soviet system of government and our system as you described, capitalistic system?

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. I want to make it clear in my own thinking. Russia was our ally, but at that time the Communist leaders in your presence were contrasting the Soviet system of government to ours. That leads me to think that there must have been a criticism of our form of government, because at least they were contrasting our form of government with theirs, with the Russian system. That was a period during which we were allied with Russia, and I am wondering to what extent that was the subject of discussion during the time we were an ally of Russia.

Miss POSKA. Well, as I said, I didn't go to subsequent meetings. I mean, I didn't go every single time there was a meeting; and from what I learned—I mean, there was—they advocated or they agreed with the Russian system that the government own everything; and individual wealth or individual holdings wasn't such in Russia. Otherwise, I mean, as far as anything subversive—

Mr. DOYLE. But it is interesting to me that during the time we were an ally with Russia, that there was a group of people who were evidently comparing, to the detriment of the capitalistic system which you have referred to—you said they used that term—evidently criticizing our form of government during the very time that they were an ally in a war against Mr. Hitler.

Miss POSKA. I mean, I never did see anything wrong with our system of government. I think, as I said before, I think it is the best. However, they, when there would be any discussion, would compare them. I don't say that they—well, they would criticize to a certain extent, but not to any great extent where I would consider it subversive insofar as tearing it down, by any means whatsoever.

Mr. DOYLE. Along what line did they discuss our being an ally of Russia?

Miss POSKA. Well, they were for it at that time.

Mr. DOYLE. Yes; but did they seem to express an appreciation of the fact that we were joining with Russia and that we were an ally of Russia?

Miss POSKA. They were very happy that we were allied with Russia.

Mr. DOYLE. And yet they did compare to the detriment of our own country, the capitalistic system, as compared with the Soviet system?

Miss POSKA. Well, that was the line at that time.

Mr. DOYLE. I have nothing further, Mr. Jackson.

Mr. JACKSON. Just one more thing.

I should like to point out to the witness, to the best of my recollection she has identified four people, and I say this in all good faith and for your own protection. You have already said under the compulsion of your oath that you cannot identify any other person who was associated with you at your meetings. I want to point out that if, subsequently, future witnesses may testify to the contrary, that a very real danger to you exists. I would not want you, out of any moral compunctions or for any reasons, to refrain from telling us if there are any more people with whom you were associated.

I say that again, Mr. Chairman; I say this for the protection of the witness.

Mr. DOYLE. That is right.

Mr. JACKSON. We have had circumstances in the past where witnesses for one reason or another felt that they should not disclose any names or some name; where subsequently it has developed that they were not testifying in full good faith, which presents the committee with only one course of action, and that is to refer the testimony to the Attorney General of the United States. I simply say that to you in order that perhaps out of the best of motives you may conceivably be withholding from us the name or names of some of the people with whom you were associated at that time.

Miss POSKA. No; I am not. I think—I have been thinking about this ever since Mr. Wheeler first interviewed me.

And I tried to think and tried to think, and I just—if I knew or if I could think, I would certainly tell you.

Mr. JACKSON. Yes; I am sure that is the case.

But I felt that I should, Mr. Chairman, place that in the record in order that it might be absolutely clear to her.

Miss POSKA. As I say, I have just told these gentlemen—I have been thinking ever since you first contacted me and we got together, I have been thinking and thinking back—whom, if anyone, I could remember who were at those meetings; and aside from the Altmans and the Christliebs, I just can't remember.

Mr. JACKSON. Of course, we don't expect you, nor do we want you, to be at all uncertain or haphazard about it. We want the facts that are in your knowledge, and that is all.

I have nothing further, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DOYLE. I think I recall in that connection, Miss Poska, your testimony is that there were only 6 or 8 people in the group.

Miss POSKA. That is right.

Mr. DOYLE. You have named 4 of them, so it would only be a matter of your telling who the other 2 or 3 were.

Mr. JACKSON. Unless they were different people at different meetings.

Miss POSKA. At different times.

Mr. JACKSON. Which would substantially increase the number, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DOYLE. How many totally different people would you say were in the group during the 8 or 10 or 12 meetings you attended?

Miss POSKA. Almost every time there would be a different conglomeration of people.

Mr. DOYLE. The Altmans and the Christliebs would make four. If the groups were not more numerous than 6 or 8 or 10, then you would

only have at most 4 different people at each meeting. If these same four people attended.

Miss POSKA. Now, for instance, I wouldn't say that they were all four there at the same time, you see.

Mr. DOYLE. I see.

Miss POSKA. They weren't always there together.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Jackson is trying to be very fair and very explicit with you.

Miss POSKA. I understand that.

Mr. DOYLE. But we are so anxious that you go out of the room feeling that you have given the best that you have according to your recollection, because we never know when some other witness is going to come forward and name other persons who might be in this same group.

Miss POSKA. That is true. I realize that, and if I—

Mr. JACKSON. Even more than that, Mr. Chairman, if I may—someone who may have on a number of occasions accompanied you to the meeting—I don't say that that occurred, but I think that is what the chairman and I are trying to point out to you, that we do not want you advertently or inadvertently to place yourself in a position where subsequent testimony may tend to incriminate you. We want to be fair. We are trying to be absolutely fair in this.

Miss POSKA. Wait a minute; to the best of my knowledge I always went alone. I don't remember of having gone with anyone. I know I had my own car, and I drove; and I was living by myself at the time.

Mr. JACKSON. So far as I know there is no testimony to the contrary, but, again, I simply stress that.

May I ask one question in conclusion?

Without prejudice to the right of our committee to release your testimony at any time, which, of course, is within the jurisdiction of the full committee, do you have any personal objection to the release of the testimony or to the fact of your testifying at this time—the fact of your cooperation with the committee?

Miss POSKA. No.

Mr. WHEELER. I think she wants it released.

Mr. JACKSON. That is the point I wanted to make.

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. JACKSON. I say that I am not binding the committee to take action one way or the other, but we should like to, in light of the fact that you have cooperated—at least, I should like to be able to say to the press that you did appear and cooperated fully with the committee.

Miss POSKA. It would make me very happy.

Mr. DOYLE. What was your motive for coming forward and asking the hearing?

Miss POSKA. Well, I didn't—

Mr. DOYLE. Why did you do that?

Miss POSKA. Why did I?

Mr. DOYLE. Yes.

Miss POSKA. I was so stunned, and I was so mad and surprised that I wanted to get the record straight that I am not a Communist; and to my knowledge—I mean, I wouldn't have anything to do with them, and to my knowledge I never was. But that is my only purpose.

Mr. DOYLE. All right. Thank you very much.

I want to ask Mr. Jackson if he wants to ask any more questions.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Chairman, I think in justice to Mr. Christlieb we should have it very clearly set forth in the record if the witness denies

membership in the Communist Party. Mr. Christlieb has testified affirmatively that the witness was, to the best of his knowledge, a member of the Communist Party, and I don't want to becloud his other identifications by any uncertainty in this case. It would seem to me from what has been adduced here today that the witness was indeed, whether she realized it or not, a member of the party.

I think you will appreciate, Mr. Chairman, the point I am making.

Mr. DOYLE. I do.

Mr. JACKSON. It is that there are other identifications which I do not want to see beclouded unless they should be beclouded, by any leaving of this in a cloud as to whether or not the witness was at one time a member of the Communist Party. So far as I personally am concerned, Mr. Chairman, the fact of attendance at what appear to have been closed meetings of the Communist Party, the fact of what appears to be recruitment by Mr. Altman, would lead me to believe that you had indeed—whether knowingly or not—become a member of the Communist Party. I simply want to make the record clear and not have the final record appear as being clouded by the profession of the witness as not knowing whether or not she had been a member of the party.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. JACKSON. Let me go back on the record.

Mr. Chairman, other individuals identified by Mr. Christlieb who were subsequently called before the committee to testify availed themselves of the privileges of the fifth amendment in refusing to answer any questions having to do with their alleged activities within the Communist Party.

Mr. WHEELER. Or affirm their membership.

Mr. JACKSON. Or conversely, affirm the testimony of Mr. Christlieb as to their membership and activities in and on behalf of the Communist Party.

Mr. DOYLE. I am glad you added that, Mr. Jackson.

I think to be perfectly fair with the witness, I should add that, too. As I hear your testimony, you state you don't know whether or not you were a member. I think that is the essence of your testimony so far as membership is concerned, you don't know whether or not you were technically; that fact as Mr. Jackson has mentioned, plus the fact that you refused to pay the dues they asked, that they asked you apparently to pay a percentage of your income as dues, and you say you never paid any of that percentage.

Miss POSKA. No, sir; I didn't.

Mr. DOYLE. But as Mr. Jackson points out, you have testified that these meetings were what you thought were closed meetings—you were not free to invite anyone to go with you?

In our experience that means that they are closed meetings, that you considered them a closed arrangement, not an invitational affair to which you could take another person. I want to be perfectly frank with you. From your testimony, my own conclusion is that whether you knew it or not you were a member of that group; I can't draw any other conclusion.

Miss POSKA. I obviously was. I very obviously was.

Mr. JACKSON. That I think must be the conclusion of any objective person looking at it. I assure you we are not in any way trying, nor

am I trying, to put any thoughts in your mind or words in your mouth, but I do want to protect the integrity of the testimony which we have received.

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. That is right.

Mr. JACKSON. Which has proven itself so far as we have been able to explore it. I am sure you understand the situation in which the committee finds itself.

Miss POSKA. Surely.

Mr. JACKSON. Not to unduly embarrass you or not to question your word in any way, but if there is any doubt in your mind on the score of membership, I would feel, Mr. Chairman, as a member of the committee, that we should ask for a denial of membership in order that the situation might be perfectly clear—either something more perhaps than simply it might have been and it might not have been, which tends to cloud the testimony of Mr. Christlieb.

Perhaps I can simplify it by asking simply, if you deny that you were ever a member of the Communist Party.

Miss POSKA. I can't deny it when my name is on the record of the Communist Party.

Mr. JACKSON. No. Your name might appear as mine might or Mr. Doyle's might, by someone simply writing it down, or the name of any other citizen whom an official of the Communist Party might perhaps want to demean by writing it in. I think this is an important matter, Mr. Doyle.

Mr. DOYLE. I do, too.

Mr. JACKSON. I cannot be personally satisfied with an answer, "Well, perhaps I was and perhaps I was not." We have had this heretofore. I personally would be unwilling to accept such an answer.

Mr. DOYLE. May I supplement Mr. Jackson's thought to you. May I ask you this: During the time you attended the meetings, did you consider yourself in your own thinking a member of the Communist Party?

Miss POSKA. No; I didn't. I didn't. I didn't consider myself a member.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Doyle, may I ask one further question? You read the reports of Mr. Christlieb's testimony.

Miss POSKA. Yes.

Mr. JACKSON. Was that testimony in any respect, so far as it pertained to you, false?

Miss POSKA. No.

Mr. JACKSON. Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. JACKSON. I have no further questions.

Mr. DOYLE. Do you have anything further to add, Miss Poska?

Miss POSKA. No; I haven't.

Mr. DOYLE. Are you perfectly satisfied?

Miss POSKA. I am very happy to have had this opportunity of getting all this off my chest.

Mr. JACKSON. Fine.

Mr. DOYLE. Is there anything else, Mr. Wheeler?

Mr. WHEELER. No.

Mr. JACKSON. Thank you very much. We thank you for coming to this hearing.

INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN THE LOS ANGELES, CALIF., AREA—Part 11

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1956

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,
Los Angeles, Calif.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ¹

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met, pursuant to call, at 11:45 a. m., in room 484 of the Statler Hotel, Los Angeles, Calif., Hon. Clyde Doyle (chairman) presiding.

Committee member present: Representative Clyde Doyle of California.

Staff member present: William A. Wheeler, investigator.

Mr. DOYLE. Mrs. Viertel, will you rise, please, and be sworn?

Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give to this subcommittee shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I do.

TESTIMONY OF VIRGINIA VIERTEL, ACCOMPANIED BY COUNSEL, MARTIN GANG

Mr. WHEELER. Will you state your full name, please?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Virginia Viertel.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you represented by counsel?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes; Mr. Martin Gang.

Mr. DOYLE. Will counsel state his name for the record?

Mr. GANG. Martin Gang, 6400 Sunset Boulevard.

Mr. WHEELER. Where were you born, Mrs. Viertel?

Mr. VIERTEL. Beaver, Pa., September 3, 1915.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you relate your educational background?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I went to Fairfax High School in Los Angeles, and then years later I went 1 year at USC and 1 year at UCLA.

Mr. WHEELER. What is your occupation?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Editor it has been. Nothing right now.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you referring to an editor in the motion picture industry?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Mostly not.

¹ Ordered released by the committee August 7, 1956.

Mr. WHEELER. Mostly not? Then in what field?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. In books. Book publishing.

Mr. WHEELER. You are appearing before the subcommittee at your own request; is that correct?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. I believe you know that you have been identified as a member of the Communist Party by witnesses before the committee?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes; I was.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you please state when you first joined the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. It isn't entirely easy, but I think it was 1936 or thereabouts.

Mr. WHEELER. When did you terminate that membership?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. That, too, is not exactly a definite date, but it was certainly erratic after 1940; but I know that after—during 1945 I never saw anybody again. That was the final end.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you previously married to Budd Schulberg?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. When did the marriage terminate in divorce?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. In 1944, I think. Is that right?

Mr. GANG. You separated in 1942.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. I believe you said you separated in 1942, were divorced in 1944.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. 1944.

Mr. WHEELER. I want the record clear.

Mr. GANG. Make the record clear, would you?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, yes. We separated in 1942 and were divorced in 1944.

Mr. WHEELER. May the record show that you were divorced in January of 1944?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Was your membership in the Communist Party during the entire period of your marriage to Mr. Schulberg?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. I was a member the whole time; but, as I say, we often went away and we weren't in constant attendance.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you state your constant attendance, then, in the Communist Party, if you possibly can? When did you start to draw away from membership—become disinterested?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, I should say in 1939. We had some small quarrels and things in 1938 and 1939, really, but I guess in 1940, that was—I don't think we attended meetings regularly ever again.

Mr. WHEELER. After 1940?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. But you still retained your membership to a later date?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, but it really didn't matter. It is hard; I know it seems strange, but membership one didn't think about. That was a rather loose—it was unimportant.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you pay Communist Party dues during the entire time of your membership?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. Mine were nominal dues. Housewife dues. Fifty cents or a dollar.

Mr. WHEELER. When did you completely divorce yourself from the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, completely in 1945.

Mr. DOYLE. May I ask, up until what time did you pay dues?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, I imagine until 1940, because after that I did not go to regular meetings. I was not a regular member.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you tell the subcommittee, please, the reasons you joined the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. It is really very simple, because we had just been through the depression and it hit most of us quite hard—if not us, because we were so young, we saw what happened, and we thought there must be economic reasons for this, and we all wanted to study and find out about it. It was bewildering to young people to have suddenly the whole world that we knew sort of crash, and then just on the humanitarian level, the unemployed, and the people were going through such hardships. That marks young people, I think, very much. It would take a very calloused young person not to respond some way. Then we were—and we responded in the only way we knew how, because we were intellectuals, so we studied and tried to find out about it.

Then we were certainly anti-Fascist, and no other organization or group seemed to be doing anything about this at that time. There was nothing that one could—a young person could go to say, at least for guidance. Not even church groups. The Communist Party held out the only knowledge—when up in Imperial Valley, for example, where the poor were starving. Nobody helped except the Communist Party. They went in and raised money; for floods, for disasters of all kinds; and they seemed like a great humanitarian group. I think most of the young people were pleased to be noticed by them.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you ever hold any office in the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No.

Mr. WHEELER. Neither on the county level nor on a club level?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you assigned to a club by the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes; I guess so. I must have been assigned, but I think I either—I must have started just with Budd, and then just continued with the writers' group.

Mr. WHEELER. You are referring to Budd Schulberg?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. I am sorry.

Mr. WHEELER. Why did you leave the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. For many years, after 1940, really, there was no reason for me to be in it. I had sort of completed my study course, and that was the main reason I was in there, and that is why I returned a few times after 1940, just because they were discussing something I wanted to hear; and they were friends also. I mean, even though I

didn't agree with—and I began to realize, you know, we voted on things and that sort, it was nonsense because the things would come down from the top and we would vote either in agreement or disagreement, but that was—had very little bearing on anything. That was quite clear. At times irritating.

Mr. WHEELER. In what specifically did you disagree with the Communist Party doctrine?

Mrs. VIERTEL. All kinds of things.

Mr. WHEELER. Mention them.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Oh, dear. That was a long time ago.

Mostly it was on minor levels. The major issues until they switched and that sort of thing; I do believe we either agreed or disagreed, but that was long after the fact. That is an incredible thing for that kind of an organization. I think generally to straighten it up on anything, I had been reading, and reading anti-Communist books for the first time, which was rather odd, and it became rather open.

Mr. WHEELER. You state one reason you became interested in the Communist Party was its stand on the rise of nazism and fascism in Europe. What was your reaction to the Stalin-Hitler pact?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Frankly, I thought it was a good maneuver to gain time.

Mr. WHEELER. How was that explained to you?

Mrs. VIERTEL. We were away. It wasn't explained. As you know, we were living in the East then and out of contact with all party members; and the Daily Worker just didn't mention it, as you know, for several days. They didn't know what to say. Budd Schulberg got terribly upset and that was really the end for him, I think.

It didn't bother me. I didn't really think it was a pact between these two people—two countries, on any other level except that I think—I thought Russia was pressed for time, and this was kind of a good stalling maneuver. I have been wrong on everything, so I can be wrong on a few more things.

Mr. WHEELER. Do you recall the names of any individuals you met as members of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes, of course. People in my group?

Mr. WHEELER. Yes.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Budd Schulberg, Ring Lardner, Jr., Dalton Trumbo, Bob Rossen, Albert Maltz; and ordinarily wives, too; though later not.

Mr. WHEELER. For the record, I think it should be shown that Budd Schulberg has appeared before the committee several years ago and cooperated.

Mr. GANG. I might say that in helping Mrs. Viertel prepare for this thing, I gave her a copy of Mr. Schulberg's testimony so she might read it and refresh her recollection as to what happened those many years ago, and I am sure she did read it.

Mrs. VIERTEL. I did read it, but it didn't refresh too much because he knew people I didn't know, and so on.

Mr. GANG. I see.

Mr. WHEELER. We have the testimony.

Mr. DOYLE. Were these 4 to 6 people you have just named known to you to be members of this Communist group?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I assumed they were, as they undoubtedly assumed I was.

Mr. DOYLE. Did you attend meetings, closed meetings, of the Communist Party with them?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, though very often one didn't know whether it was a closed or open meeting, it seems to me. I mean, I have no definite proof that they were, but I assume they were.

Mr. DOYLE. May I make it clear? Do you recall attending any closed meetings of the group at which these 4 or 5 people you named were also present with you?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, and there must have been others, too.

Mr. DOYLE. I mean meetings at which a non-Communist would not have been admitted.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Probably, yes.

Mr. GANG. Off the record.

Mr. DOYLE. Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. DOYLE. Back on the record.

Mr. WHEELER. There has been previous testimony before the committee. It appears in part 4, Communist Infiltration of the Hollywood Motion Picture Industry; the hearings which were held September 17, 18, and 19, 1951, wherein you were identified as a member of the Communist Party and a member of a Communist Party group. This testimony reflects that the following individuals were members of the group: Gordon Kahn—do you recall Mr. Kahn as a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I knew him very well. He may have been in my group and may not. I certainly attended meetings with him.

Mr. WHEELER. You have attended meetings with him?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Communist Party meetings?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, but I just don't know whether he was in my particular group or not.

Mr. DOYLE. Were those closed Communist Party meetings?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. They would be—I don't believe I ever was in a closed meeting with him.

Mr. WHEELER. On what would you base your identification that he was a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I assumed he was a Communist from conversations. He was in our group, social group. He spoke Communist the way we all did. I don't know what he would have been doing there if he hadn't been.

Mr. WHEELER. He has been previously identified before the committee, Mr. Doyle.

Mr. DOYLE. Thank you.

Mr. WHEELER. Maurice Rapf.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes; I am sorry. He was—I believe he was in the closed group with us.

Mr. WHEELER. I believe you mentioned Ring Lardner, Jr.?

Mr. GANG. She did.

Mr. WHEELER. Budd Schulberg, Sam Ornitz.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't think he was in our little group. It was rather small.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know him?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I knew him, and I knew him to be a Communist from his own saying so.

May I smoke?

Mr. DOYLE. Yes, indeed.

Mr. WHEELER. Do you recall anyone else who was a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, I am sure I would. It is awful to be so vague. Like Maurice Rapf. I knew him very well, but I hadn't thought of him until you mentioned his name.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know Jerome Chodorov?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes; I knew him very well, but not politically. I just knew him as a friend.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know Frank Davis?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes; I knew him.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know him to be a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No.

Mr. DOYLE. Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. DOYLE. Back on the record.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know John Howard Lawson?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, John Howard Lawson.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you a member of the Young Communist League prior to your membership in the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. I don't know whether I was really a member, but I went to YCL meetings; but I don't think I was——

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know Elizabeth Wilson?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. She appeared before the committee as a cooperative witness, and in the course of her testimony identified you as being in attendance at meetings of the Young Communist group.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, we went together to a YCL convention in San Francisco, and I drove her, but I think that was the only time I was ever in an actual meeting.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you selected as a delegate by the YCL?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. I just wanted to go. I had never been.

Mr. DOYLE. What year would that have been?

Mr. GANG. 1937 or 1938.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. It must have been. It was very early.

Mr. DOYLE. Would it have been 1937 or 1938?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I would think 1937.

Mr. DOYLE. In other words, you drove from Los Angeles to San Francisco?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. You must have been interested.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I never had been to San Francisco, either; and a group of us went up. I can't remember anybody else. I know Betty Anderson was with us, but I don't know what other characters I took up there.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you use another name when you joined the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you have a Communist Party name?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. The American consul in Zurich told me I had and told me the name, and he asked me if I knew this woman, and I said, "No," absolutely confident; and he said it was I. So apparently I had another name and just didn't know it.

Mr. WHEELER. When were you interviewed by the American consulate in Zurich?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Two years ago.

Mr. WHEELER. Was it in regard to Communist Party membership?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. It was in regard to my passport. If I intended living in Europe—

Mr. WHEELER. Our records show that you used the name Joan Benton.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. That is what he said, but I had no way of knowing that.

Mr. WHEELER. Do you recall if you were ever a member of the Sam Adams Club of the Communist Party, Hollywood section?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I never heard of that.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you ever attend any closed meetings of the Communist Party after the year 1945?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No; nor open ones, either.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know Leon Becker as a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. I knew Leon very well. I knew he went to a study group, and I don't know—

Mr. WHEELER. Did Leon Becker reside in your and your former husband's home for a while?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. And Lester Koenig?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. They both resided with you?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. We shared a house.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know Lester Koenig was a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. There again I assumed he was, but he was not in my group.

Mr. WHEELER. What year did they reside at your home?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I suppose it was 1938 and possibly the beginning of 1939. I am not sure. I am sorry. I know the house and all that, but I am not sure when. 1938 or 1939, as I recollect.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you go to Mexico City in 1939?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Who accompanied you on the trip?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. 1939, my former sister-in-law, Sonia Schulberg, and John Spivak.

Mr. WHEELER. John Spivak?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. John L. Spivak. Now, he had Communist Party contacts, but I didn't know that he was a party member.

Mr. WHEELER. For what reason did you travel to Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. He didn't know how to drive, and I told him I would drive him, because he wanted to go down—he wanted me to take

photographs, which I did, of what he thought were Japanese fortifications in Mexico—not fortifications, but spies, apparently, who were working at odd jobs, and ships that came into the harbor with all kinds of—I don't know—terrible things on them; and I did take pictures and they were published in Ken magazine, which became defunct. That was the purpose of the trip, but mostly it was just a wonderful time. Sonia and I had a great time.

Mr. WHEELER. Where did you stay in Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, all kinds of little—it wasn't Mexico City. We went down as far as Guaymas.

Mr. WHEELER. I mean, what coastal towns did you visit?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Guaymas.

Mr. WHEELER. Was that the only place?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. The only coastal.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you have a contact with any other person while in Mexico City or in Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. We didn't know anybody.

Mr. WHEELER. Just the three of you went?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. That would be your former—

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Sister-in-law.

Mr. WHEELER. Sonia Schulberg.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. We were left to our own devices, except the time where I took pictures of the Japanese barber who was supposed to be a spy, and the fishing boat that had some sort of equipment.

Mr. WHEELER. Did the Communist Party in Los Angeles County or the State of California know you were making this trip?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No.

Mr. WHEELER. How long were you gone?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't remember. I suppose 10 days. Something like that.

Mr. WHEELER. How far is Guaymas?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. It is really the Gulf of California. It is that—you get there much faster by boat from Ensenada down to Guaymas, which is an ordinary fishing run when you charter fishing boats. They often go down as far as Guaymas. We went down through Hermosillo. I guess the border was Nogales. We never met anyone that he was seeing because he would disappear on these mysterious missions in the evening and so on. We didn't know where he went and he didn't tell us about it, either.

Mr. WHEELER. In other words, you were not in constant contact with him?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No, indeed.

Mr. WHEELER. You were gone 10 days. It would take what—2 days to get down there?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. We stayed some time in Hermosillo, and then we took a little longer than we thought because the road ended and we had to drive over desert and we didn't know where we were going. We stayed in Guaymas some time. A few days, anyway.

Mr. WHEELER. You say he would leave every night?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. And during the day, too.

Mr. WHEELER. During the day, too?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. He was making phone calls, busy seeing people. He didn't tell and we didn't care. We weren't interested in what he was doing.

Mr. WHEELER. How did you first meet this John Spivak?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. At our house, I guess; through Budd, I imagine.

Mr. DOYLE. We will take a short recess.

(Short recess taken.)

Mr. DOYLE. You may proceed, Mr. Wheeler.

Mr. WHEELER. How long after you met Mr. Spivak did you make the trip to Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I have no idea when I met him. It seems to me Budd must have known him from college, I should say.

Mr. WHEELER. Was he the same age?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. No. He was older, but he must have known him because that was Budd's most active political tie in all sorts of fields. Not as a Communist, I don't mean, but as editor of the paper and so on he met other editors, writers, and there were lecturers; and Spivak was one of the well-known fellows in young intellectual circles. We did read his books and so on. I can't remember the names of them any more. He spoke at all kinds of meetings, different kinds of meetings, you know.

Mr. WHEELER. You married Budd Schulberg on December 31, 1936?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. 1936.

Mr. WHEELER. This trip to Mexico was in the year 1939. and that would date your meeting with Mr. Spivak between 1936 and 1939?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Not necessarily.

Mr. WHEELER. You said Budd Schulberg introduced you two at the house. I assume that you were married?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, we lived with his father after we were married, and I was there considerably before we were married—I mean, there quite a lot. I knew all his friends.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you meet Mr. Spivak before or after your marriage?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I wouldn't know, because we were married in the house that we finally lived in, but that was his father's house.

Mr. WHEELER. How many times did you see Mr. Spivak, before the trip to Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, I have no idea. I am sorry.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you consider yourself a good friend of his at that time?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No.

Mr. WHEELER. What I am trying to get at, is it unusual for two women to drive a man to Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Not really.

Mr. WHEELER. What were the reasons behind it? I mean, how well did you know him, as a good friend? Did he frequent your home?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. He made long-distance phone calls.

Mr. WHEELER. You are being very vague about it.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't mean to be vague.

Mr. WHEELER. Here is a man you and your sister-in-law went to Mexico with for 10 days, and it seems to me——

Mrs. VIERTTEL. We had known him around. He had come to the beach house. We had known him a long time, but we weren't intimate friends.

Mr. WHEELER. For whom did he write?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Papers, magazines; I don't really know what ones they were. This particular one was for Ken, Ken magazine. It is not any more, but he had an assignment to go down and see about the Japanese spies, and we simply thought it would be a nice trip. We had made many trips together, my sister-in-law and I. We were very close.

Mr. WHEELER. Have you see Mr. Spivak subsequent to the time of the trip to Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I think he left. I don't remember seeing him.

Mr. WHEELER. When is the last time you heard of him?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I haven't heard of him at all.

Mr. WHEELER. He completely dropped out of sight?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't remember ever seeing him.

Mr. WHEELER. No more phone calls, no contact?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. He went East, and we certainly never looked him up, so I don't know what happened to him.

Mr. WHEELER. How many pictures were taken in Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, I took endless pictures—you mean photographs that I took?

Mr. WHEELER. Yes.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, quite a lot. Several film packs. I had an old Graflex.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you give all of them to Mr. Spivak?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, all the ones that he could use of the boats.

Mr. WHEELER. Were they turned over to any other person?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. I have no idea what happened to them.

Mr. WHEELER. They were all turned over to Mr. Spivak. How many trips did you make to Mexico?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I made another one—

Mr. WHEELER. Either before or subsequent.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, lots across the border here, but into Mexico proper.

Mr. WHEELER. Let us take Mexico proper.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I think the only other one was, I guess, 1942.

Mr. WHEELER. July 30?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't know the date.

Mr. WHEELER. That is the date you returned.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh.

Mr. WHEELER. How long were you in Mexico on this trip?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. A few days. I don't know exactly how long.

Mr. WHEELER. Who accompanied you on the trip?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No one. I went down to see my husband who was there working.

Mr. WHEELER. In Mexico City?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Did this trip to Mexico in 1942 have any bearing on your Communist Party membership?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No; I went down to ask him for a divorce. That is all I went for.

Mr. WHEELER. Did the trip to Mexico in 1939 have any bearing on your Communist Party membership?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Not to us; no.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you know Mr. Spivak was a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't know that he was a member.

Mr. WHEELER. What was his political philosophy, if you recall? He was in your home.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Well, he was certainly left, I would say; but I don't know that he was—I don't know really.

Mr. WHEELER. How did you consider him? I mean, certainly being a member of the Communist Party you wouldn't have constant association or go on a trip with him if he was a Fascist.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No; certainly not. That doesn't necessarily mean he was a Communist.

Mr. WHEELER. No; I am not saying he was a Communist.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. He was certainly nothing—as I said, he was left, what we considered left.

Mr. WHEELER. His philosophy, then, was acceptable to you?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes, certainly.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you detained at the border on July 30, 1942?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. What transpired?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I can't remember except that they asked me all kinds of—I don't even know who they were, but I was called aside when we got to the office, you know, and asked whom I had seen in Mexico; and I guess that I must have said—and I couldn't understand why they were questioning me. I really didn't understand that at all. That was mystifying. I still don't know why.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you see anyone in Mexico besides your husband?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes. I saw an associate of my husband at that time, who to my knowledge had no connection with the party.

Mr. WHEELER. How long were you detained at the border, Mrs. Vierttel?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I don't remember that, either.

Mr. WHEELER. You said it was unusual to be detained.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Just to be detained was incredible, but I don't remember how long it was.

Mr. WHEELER. Was it an hour?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I think so.

Mr. WHEELER. Half a day?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No; I guess it was an hour or so.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you tell us, please, what they asked you while you were being detained there?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I believe they asked me who I had seen in Mexico; and I answered, "My husband."

Oh, yes, I do remember. They asked me if I had seen anyone who was connected in any way with the Falangist group, and I can remember being amazed, because that obviously would have been the Fascist group in Spain, and why I would have seen them in Mexico bewildered me.

I don't remember anything else they asked me.

Mr. WHEELER. Was your luggage in your possession at the time you were interviewed—I assume it was customs.

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes; it was customs.

Mr. WHEELER. Was your luggage in your possession?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I don't remember, because it was after a plane flight and I don't know whether the luggage was out and I had it or whether it was still in the plane or the baggage room. I don't know.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you know whether or not your luggage was searched?

Mrs. VIERTEL. No; I don't know.

Mr. WHEELER. Now, on both your trips to Mexico—these two trips we are specifically talking about—you went without the knowledge of the Communist Party; is that right?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Well, I don't think it is quite right to say without the knowledge. Without the sanction.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you go there at the direction of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTEL. No; certainly not.

Mr. DOYLE. Well, may I ask this: Did you go of your own volition but with their approval?

Mrs. VIERTEL. No. Just of my own volition, and my friends certainly knew I was going; but it had no bearing on the party at all.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. WHEELER. Proceed.

Mrs. VIERTEL. I would like to make it clear that on neither trip to Mexico was there anything concerned except my own personal life, and specifically nothing with reference to the Communist Party.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you questioned by the Federal Bureau of Investigation?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. Did they discuss these trips to Mexico with you?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes, and I told them the same thing, that I didn't understand it.

Mr. WHEELER. Did the American consul ask you?

Mrs. VIERTEL. No.

Mr. WHEELER. You were interviewed twice, weren't you, while in Europe?

Mrs. VIERTEL. More than twice I went to see him. He was very sympathetic, very nice. We tried to work out—I told him just about everything I have said now, really.

Mr. WHEELER. In 1943 did you reside at 1439 Stone Canyon Road?

Mrs. VIERTEL. What year?

Mr. WHEELER. 1943.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes, I did.

Mr. WHEELER. They have a reference here that on August 21 of that year a benefit for the People's World was held at that address.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes. I gave my house for this occasion. I didn't have anything else to do with it except giving the house for the party.

Mr. WHEELER. Did you offer your house for other occasions?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I may have. I don't remember, but that was—I remember it was a very large group, and I had to clean up afterward for days.

Mr. DOYLE. How would you describe the large group? How many people?

Mrs. VIERTEL. There were hundreds there.

Mr. DOYLE. 200, 500, 700?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I don't know, but just hundreds. I never saw so many people in one house and the garden; but hundreds, certainly.

Mr. WHEELER. I have a reference that your former husband, Budd Schulberg, made a trip to the Soviet Union. Did you accompany him on that trip?

Mrs. VIERTEL. No. I didn't know him then.

Mr. WHEELER. Was that prior to your marriage?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. WHEELER. Back on the record.

Can you identify anyone else you knew to be a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I don't think so. I am sure I could have known—

Mr. GANG. In other words, if the names were put to you they might refresh your recollection?

Mrs. VIERTEL. That is the only way.

Mr. GANG. If you want to do that, Bill, go ahead.

Mr. WHEELER. I don't think so, because most of the names that I would mention have already been publicly identified.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes. I was surprised when I read Budd's statement of people that I didn't know in the paper. I have been surprised steadily.

Mr. WHEELER. What led to your complete break with the Communist Party in 1945?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Well, I really hadn't attended meetings regularly at all, as you know, since 1940, but every now and then and so on; but it was impossible with my new marriage.

Mr. GANG. Fix that. Whom did you marry?

Mrs. VIERTEL. To Peter Viertel.

Mr. WHEELER. When did you marry him?

Mrs. VIERTEL. In 1944.

Mr. GANG. Then tell what happened.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Then he was overseas, and I had a baby, and during the time I was pregnant I lived at Malibu. I was very far away and I simply dropped those contacts. It wasn't possible for me to even see my friends any more unless they came to see me, which they did occasionally, but I didn't go to meetings and I kind of officially dropped out—not officially, but more or less dropped out. I do believe I went back to 1 or 2 meetings during the time I was pregnant. Then after I had the baby I never returned to any meeting.

My husband returned in 1945, and it was impossible for me to see any of my old friends, even, after his return, because he was so violently anti-Communist; not only in the large sense, but even against the individuals who were that far left; and consequently I made new friends, didn't even see the old friends again, and never—not socially or in the party did I have the same contacts.

Mr. WHEELER. I have no further questions.

Mr. GANG. Any questions, Congressman Doyle?

Mr. DOYLE. As I recall it, you had some kind of a break in 1940, but in 1943 you evidently were gracious enough to the old group to have hundreds of people use your garden?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes, that is all.

Mr. DOYLE. The Communist group.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Certainly. That seems strange, but it isn't because—it was for the newspaper, after all, and it was always folding. It

never had enough money to go on, and so on; so we would give a party and make some money for it.

In 1943 I believe it was—I did go to groups from time to time, but not—it wasn't regular. I was working and it wasn't the way it was.

Mr. DOYLE. Was there ever a time when you felt that the teachings of the Communist Party, as contrasted to the principles of our own Nation, were inconsistent?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. The teachings, the things we learned were excellent; but we didn't learn Communist Party methods nor did we know what the Communist Party was out to get.

Mr. DOYLE. When did you learn that?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Oh, slowly, irrevocably it came over us, most of us, I think. There wasn't one definite time I can say I realized at that moment that it was an organization which we had no business belonging to, because we didn't really understand its aims or its methods.

Mr. DOYLE. How would you state what you ultimately learned that the Communist Party was out to get, as you say? What major things would you refer to?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. I suppose what we said of the capital press was partly responsible. You can't help reading it in Time and every magazine, every newspaper. When they said that the funds that we raised for Spain were mishandled, well, this was a great blow, and I didn't believe it at the time. Slowly I realized we had no way of knowing what happened to the money that we raised; there was no real accounting; and I think you begin to suspect, or I began to suspect, first of all, Russia. The people who were running Russia were not, to my mind, splendid citizens, clearly. I hated the hero worship of Stalin, and the reverse now is equally unattractive. There were many things we didn't pay any attention to because I—and I imagine many people felt the same way—Russia could make all the mistakes they wanted, it didn't matter. That was not our country. We were trying to improve our own country. If it was a failure there, we hoped it wouldn't be. The whole Socialist experiment was not our country. During the trials I didn't even read about them. I said, "Suppose it is ghastly. That has no bearing on America."

Mr. DOYLE. But were you not trying to apply the Socialist doctrine of the Soviet Union to our country?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. We were learning about it. There was certainly no opportunity for application.

Mr. DOYLE. But in theory you were trying to apply it as a Communist?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. The Soviet Socialist state in theory, at least?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. No. It was just a Socialist state. We hoped America would finally get—would finally become Socialist.

Mr. GANG. What about the democracy in the Communist Party? How did it operate? Was there any?

Mrs. VIERTTEL. It was pretty ghastly. That also was another disenchanting thing. As I said, when we were to have a little election or voice "Yes" or "No" on something that had come down—and I can't remember the things any more—it was clear that we had no voice.

Mr. DOYLE. As a matter of practice within the Communist Party during the years you were in it, was there applied democracy or applied democratic processes?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Oh, yes; theoretically.

Mr. GANG. But actually? You are making it very difficult for us here. Don't be so finicky. Tell the facts.

Mrs. VIERTEL. No; it certainly wasn't in our little group. It wasn't. Someone would take charge, and that would be it.

Mr. DOYLE. I am deliberately asking you a few questions to get the benefit of your conclusions. You have had an unusual experience and can be helpful to us in Congress in understanding it.

Mrs. VIERTEL. I was such an unimportant member. This is another problem: that I wasn't in on the higher level.

Mr. DOYLE. But you were an intellectual in the Communist Party.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes; that is the only reason I got in, and for intellectual reasons I think most of us got out, for the same accumulation of them, not just one thing.

Mr. DOYLE. As you know, the committee exists by authority of Congress to learn in what way we can conclude means to recommend to Congress different or additional legislation.

Should we modify, change, amend, or add to the present laws? Have you any thought in that field? In other words, is Congress meeting the problem so far as legislation is concerned? If not, wherein are we failing?

Mr. GANG. May I ask, what you mentioned to me off the record in that line, do you mean what laws could be passed to help prevent such a vacuum for the young as existed in the 1930's when young people were sucked into it?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I don't think they need to be, frankly. I don't think conditions are the same now. The young people I know now are not interested remotely, and I think the times have changed, especially in our country. There is no reason for it. There is no need to find—

Mr. DOYLE. Why did you come forward and volunteer to come before the committee?

Mrs. VIERTEL. There are an awful lot of circumstances altogether. I think probably I would just have let it go, because my life is pretty busy just being a mother, you know; but they know about Peter, certainly—

Mr. GANG. But the point Mr. Doyle made is do you feel that you want to tell the committee of Congress everything you know to help them in legislating or not legislating on the problem?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes, certainly; but whatever I know, I didn't believe before anything I could say would be of any help, because I didn't know enough. I knew nothing new. I didn't know as much as most people, so I didn't think it was urgent or interesting before.

Mr. DOYLE. Let me ask one concluding question.

Off the record please, Mr. Reporter.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. DOYLE. Now, is the identification that we have previously mentioned true?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. You heard Mr. Wheeler refer to your identification as a member of the Communist Party as having been made by certain persons?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. Was that identification correct?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes; it was.

Mr. DOYLE. And true?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. I want to ask this: If in the future you learn of other former Communists who come to the point where they wonder whether or not they are welcome to come before the committee, will you make it clear that they are welcome?

Mrs. VIERTEL. I do believe everybody knows that they can.

Mr. DOYLE. You think that is generally known now?

Mrs. VIERTEL. Yes.

Mr. DOYLE. Because we have that standing rule and invitation to appear before the committee.

Mrs. VIERTEL. I think they often don't know where you are, possibly.

Mr. DOYLE. That is true. They can always get in touch with Mr. Wheeler.

Mrs. VIERTEL. I also want to state I am grateful indeed to Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Doyle for letting me come and clear up whatever I could.

Mr. DOYLE. We want to thank you very much.

Mrs. VIERTEL. Thank you. I am sorry I was vague and not helpful.

(Whereupon, at 12:50 p. m., Wednesday, June 6, 1956, the executive hearing of the witness was adjourned.)

INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN THE LOS ANGELES, CALIF., AREA—Part 11

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, 1956

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES,
Los Angeles, Calif.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ¹

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met, pursuant to call, at 3 p. m., in room 484 of the Statler Hotel, Los Angeles, Calif., Hon. Clyde Doyle (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives Clyde Doyle and Donald L. Jackson, of California.

Staff member present: William A. Wheeler, investigator.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Ayeroff, will you rise, please, and be sworn?

Do you solemnly swear that the evidence you shall give to this subcommittee shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?

Mr. AYEROFF. I do.

TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH AYEROFF

Mr. WHEELER. Will you state your full name?

Mr. AYEROFF. Joseph Ayeroff.

Mr. WHEELER. When and where were you born, Mr. Ayeroff?

Mr. AYEROFF. New York City, August 16, 1911.

Mr. WHEELER. I see you are not represented by counsel.

Mr. AYEROFF. Yes.

Mr. WHEELER. You have that privilege if you so desire. Do you wish to proceed without counsel?

Mr. AYEROFF. That is right.

Mr. DOYLE. In other words, that is perfectly satisfactory to you, Mr. Ayeroff, to proceed without a lawyer?

Mr. AYEROFF. If I need a lawyer, I can always get one.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you tell the committee of your educational background?

Mr. AYEROFF. I was born in New York City. We moved to Utah when I was a year old. We farmed there, Sanpete County, until we were about five.

We moved to Aurora. I attended public schools of Utah, Lincoln, Nebr.; Denver, Colo.; the coal mining towns of Pennsylvania; moved

¹ Ordered released by the committee August 7, 1956.

back to New York; moved up to upper New York; attended the high schools of New York City, and I attended the College of the City of New York for 5 years.

Mr. WHEELER. Would you relate your employment since leaving college?

Mr. AYEROFF. Since leaving college I was a salesman for an importing concern, Lavin & Lauer, at 225 Fifth Avenue, New York City. That was immediately upon completion of college.

I came to California in 1933. I was in the employ of my uncle, the Economy Printing Co., until I entered the armed services in 1942.

Upon completion of my military service, my brother and myself are in the furniture and appliance business. We operate two stores; one at 1066 South La Cienega Boulevard, and the other in North Hollywood at 5716 Lankershim.

Mr. WHEELER. When were you discharged from the Army?

Mr. AYEROFF. I imagine about the end of 1945.

Mr. WHEELER. Where were you stationed while in the Army?

Mr. AYEROFF. I was inducted at Azusa, which was at Riverside, and I was stationed at Fort Worden, Wash., for a short period of time, and the rest of the time I was stationed at the port of embarkation, San Francisco, attached to the commanding general, doing special service in the orientation department of the Army.

Mr. WHEELER. The committee in the past has received considerable testimony regarding the techniques employed by the Communist Party in infiltrating major political parties. We have testimony from former members of the Communist Party who have identified you as a member of the Communist Party, and as having been instrumental in the infiltration of a major political party. We desire to go into that.

First, I would like to ask you, have you been a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer that question on the grounds of the fifth amendment, that my answer might tend to incriminate me.

Mr. WHEELER. Do you know Mr. Louis Rosser?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer that question on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Mr. Rosser, on Tuesday, January 15, 1952, identified you as a member of the Communist Party. Was he correct in this identification?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you acquainted with or have you ever known Max Silver?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Mr. Silver testified before the committee in executive session, and he likewise identified you as a member of the Communist Party. Was Mr. Silver correct?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you now a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. While in the city of San Francisco, were you active in the American Veterans Committee?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you the head of chapter No. 1 of the American Veterans Committee in San Francisco?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you a member of the Communist Party while in the Armed Forces?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you familiar with a club called the Liberal Club? This organization was functioning at New York City College in 1931, at which time I believe you were attending New York City College.

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Do you know Alice Orans?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Have you ever attended any Communist meetings with Alice Orans?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds previously stated.

Mr. WHEELER. Are you a member of the Henry Eaton Post of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. We have no record of you serving in the Loyalist forces in Spain. Did you?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Were you a member of the Young Communist League?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Our record shows that you participated in a number of functions for youth sponsored by the Communist Party. It shows that you were elected chairman of the second session of the American Youth Congress at a meeting held at Siegal Hall. This was some time ago.

Mr. AYEROFF. It must have been. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. Have you supported the Communist Party press, the Daily People's World?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same grounds.

Mr. WHEELER. According to the People's World of December 30, 1949, Ayeroff Bros., 1066 South La Cienega, sent heartiest greetings to the Daily People's World; is that correct?

Mr. AYEROFF. You are reading it there.

Mr. WHEELER. Was it correct or not? Did you send heartiest greetings to the People's World?

Mr. AYEROFF. I refuse to answer on the same ground.

Mr. WHEELER. You do have a store located at 1066 South La Cienega?

Mr. AYEROFF. Yes; we do.

Mr. WHEELER. There are a number of references, Mr. Chairman, to Ayeroff Bros., Joseph Ayeroff, and, in fact, to the whole family. I can see no reason for pursuing this interrogation. I have no questions.

Mr. DOYLE. Any questions, Mr. Jackson?

Mr. JACKSON. I have no questions.

Mr. DOYLE. I have no questions, Mr. Ayeroff.

Mr. WHEELER. I have nothing further.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Ayeroff, thank you very much.

(Whereupon, at 3:15 p. m., Wednesday, June 6, 1956, the executive hearing of the witness was adjourned.)

INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN THE LOS ANGELES, CALIF., AREA—Part 11

THURSDAY, JULY 5, 1956

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION ¹

A subcommittee of the Committee on Un-American Activities met at 10 a. m., pursuant to notice, in room 227 of the House Office Building, Hon. Clyde Doyle (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Representatives Clyde Doyle, of California (presiding), and Donald L. Jackson, of California.

Staff members present: Frank S. Tavenner, counsel; and Courtney E. Owens, investigator.

Mr. DOYLE. The subcommittee will be in order.

Will you please rise and be sworn? Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. HUBLEY. I do.

TESTIMONY OF JOHN HUBLEY; ACCOMPANIED BY COUNSEL, ARTHUR P. McNULTY

Mr. TAVENNER. Will you state your name, please, Mr. Hubley?

Mr. HUBLEY. John Hubley.

Mr. TAVENNER. Will counsel accompanying the witness please identify himself for the record?

Mr. McNULTY. My name is Arthur P. McNulty. I am from New York City, and my office address is 101 West 57th Street, New York City.

May I just ask one question preliminary? I do not know what the requirements of a quorum are for the committee, and I believe it is three.

Mr. TAVENNER. I think that the chairman should announce the members of the subcommittee.

Mr. DOYLE. I was going to remark after the witness gave his name, that by virtue of direction of the chairman of the full committee, a subcommittee of three has been named to hold this hearing: Representatives Donald L. Jackson, of California, Clyde Doyle, of California, as subcommittee chairman, and Mr. Edwin E. Willis, of Louisi-

¹ Ordered released by the committee September 4, 1956.

ana. Two of the three members of the subcommittee being present, there is a quorum of the subcommittee.

Mr. TAVENNER. When and where were you born, Mr. Hubley?

Mr. HUBLEY. I was born in Marinette, Wis., in 1914.

Mr. TAVENNER. Where do you now reside?

Mr. HUBLEY. In New York City.

Mr. TAVENNER. How long have you lived in New York City?

Mr. HUBLEY. Approximately 4 or 5 months.

Mr. TAVENNER. Will you tell the committee, please, what your occupation is?

Mr. HUBLEY. I am an artist, a film artist, a cartoonist, director of animated cartoons, and producer of animated cartoon films.

Mr. TAVENNER. As a producer, are you the head of a company, or a corporation?

Mr. HUBLEY. I am head of a company called Story Board, Inc.

Mr. TAVENNER. In what business is it engaged?

Mr. HUBLEY. It is engaged in the production of animated film.

Mr. TAVENNER. How long have you been the head of that company?

Mr. HUBLEY. The company was formed about 2 years ago.

Mr. TAVENNER. Will you tell the committee, please, briefly what your formal educational training has been?

Mr. HUBLEY. I went to high school in Michigan, 1 year or, I believe, 1 or 2 years of college in Los Angeles, and 3 years of art school in Los Angeles.

Mr. TAVENNER. What school did you attend in Los Angeles?

Mr. HUBLEY. The Art Center School.

Mr. TAVENNER. What was the date of the completion of your formal educational training in Los Angeles?

Mr. HUBLEY. Approximately 1936.

Mr. TAVENNER. Did you serve in the Armed Forces of the United States?

Mr. HUBLEY. Yes, I did.

Mr. TAVENNER. During what period of time?

Mr. HUBLEY. The period of 1942 to 1945.

Mr. TAVENNER. Will you tell the committee, please, what your employment was between 1936 and 1942?

Mr. HUBLEY. I was employed at the Walt Disney Studio as an art director or what is known in our trade as a layout man.

Mr. TAVENNER. Over what period of time were you so employed?

Mr. HUBLEY. From 1936 to 1941. From 1941 until 1942 I was employed in the same capacity, by Screen Gems, Inc.

Mr. TAVENNER. Where?

Mr. HUBLEY. In Hollywood.

Mr. TAVENNER. On return from your service in the Armed Forces in 1945, how were you employed?

Mr. HUBLEY. I was employed as a director, an artist in an organization called United Productions of America.

Mr. TAVENNER. That would be from 1945 until what date?

Mr. HUBLEY. Until 1952.

Mr. TAVENNER. And since 1952, how have you been employed?

Mr. HUBLEY. I have been free lancing and I have been employed by Story Board, Inc.

Mr. TAVENNER. Mr. Hubley, this committee began its investigation of Communist activities—that is, Communist infiltration into the

entertainment field—back in March 1951, and it has been engaged constantly since that time in making investigations in that field. It has come to the attention of the committee that there was a group of artists, some of them being in the cartoonist field, and being employed at Walt Disney Studios, who met as a group of Communist Party members. Some of these homes in which the meetings were held were said to be the homes of William Pomerance, Edward Biberman, and others.

According to the information that came to the committee through sworn testimony, it appeared that at some of these meetings the question of the use of arts was fully discussed from the viewpoint of having art to carry a particular message as distinguished from the practice of art for art's sake.

Our purpose in calling you here today, as part of our investigation into this field, is to inquire as to what knowledge you have, if any, of such meetings. Let me ask you first, Were you acquainted with Edward Biberman?

Mr. HUBLEY. Well, in answer to your question, Mr. Tavenner, I would like to state that I feel that in the area of politics and in the area associations, workwise or social, that I do not feel personally that your committee should ask me to reveal or speak on these matters, either with my opinions or my associations.

Mr. TAVENNER. By that do you mean that you decline to answer the question?

Mr. HUBLEY. Well, I would mean that I do not consider—

Mr. TAVENNER. You are expressing a reason why you would prefer not to answer the question, but you have not clearly stated whether or not you are merely raising an objection or whether you are actually refusing to answer the question.

Mr. HUBLEY. Well, I am raising an objection to the line of questioning in the sense that I do not agree that it is a proper question for a person such as myself to be asked.

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. Chairman, I suggest that a substantive question be put to the witness in order that we may clarify this matter.

Mr. TAVENNER. My question was whether or not this witness knew Edward Biberman. In view of the witness' statement, I think that it is perfectly proper to direct that he answer.

Mr. DOYLE. I might state this to the witness, that the committee does not feel that in asking that question, that we are going into the field of your political beliefs. Under Public Law 601, we are directed by Congress to go into any field in which it appears that there is infiltration by Soviet communism, whether it is in art, music, literature, government, or labor, or the legal profession.

That is the basis of this question. We have not, and we will not, go into your political beliefs. We cannot accept your objection as a valid answer to the question.

So that my duty as subcommittee chairman is, in view of that fact, to instruct you to answer the question, because an objection is not a declining to answer, as we see it. I do instruct you to answer the question, whatever your answer may be.

Mr. HUBLEY. Well, since the question was framed within the reference to political activities, and also associations, I choose to invoke my constitutional privilege under the first amendment and under the fifth amendment.

Mr. DOYLE. This committee recognizes the invoking of those privileges as entirely proper where conscientiously used.

Mr. TAVENNER. Mr. Chairman, is it not the view of the committee that it recognizes the fifth amendment may be a valid reason for refusing to answer a question of that type, but the first amendment would not be?

Mr. DOYLE. That is right.

Mr. TAVENNER. Have you at any time been acquainted with William Pomerance?

Mr. HUBLEY. May I consult counsel?

Mr. TAVENNER. Surely.

(Witness consulted his counsel.)

Mr. HUBLEY. Since you, in your previous questioning have referred to Mr. Pomerance in a certain connection, I decline on the same grounds.

Mr. TAVENNER. Are you acquainted with David Hilberman?

Mr. HUBLEY. Yes; I am.

Mr. TAVENNER. Where was Hilberman employed during the period you were employed by the Walt Disney Studios?

Mr. HUBLEY. As I recall, Hilberman was employed at the Walt Disney Studio around 1940.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Chairman, may I just talk with the witness at this time?

Mr. DOYLE. You may confer with your client at any time.

(Witness consulted his counsel.)

Mr. TAVENNER. Was David Hilberman known to you to be a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. HUBLEY. This is a similar question, Mr. Counsel, to the other one and I have already stated my intention, I think, rather clearly on questions of this kind.

Mr. DOYLE. We cannot accept that as a satisfactory answer to the question. If you mean by your answer that you plead your constitutional privilege to this question, the same as you did the previous one, then I suggest you make it clear that you plead your constitutional privilege if that is consistent with your counsel's advice to you.

But, the form of your answer is not satisfactory to the committee; that is what I am saying to you.

(Witness consulted his counsel.)

Mr. HUBLEY. It is consistent with my counsel's advice and also with my own conscience and advice that I invoke the rights under the constitution in all questions of this kind.

Mr. TAVENNER. Do you refuse to answer the question that I asked you on the ground of the fifth amendment?

Mr. HUBLEY. The first and fifth amendments.

Mr. TAVENNER. I say, do you?

Mr. HUBLEY. Yes.

Mr. TAVENNER. I just wanted the record to show plainly what your position is. Are you acquainted with Bernyce Polifka Fleury?

Mr. HUBLEY. Yes, sir. I worked with her from time to time in various capacities in the studios.

Mr. TAVENNER. Was she employed at the Walt Disney Studio at the time that you were?

Mr. HUBLEY. I honestly do not recall that she was employed at the Disney Studio.

Mr. TAVENNER. Do you recall where she was employed?

Mr. HUBLEY. I believe she worked at Warner Bros., and I believe she worked at UPA.

Mr. TAVENNER. Was she known to you to be a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. HUBLEY. I must decline again on the grounds previously stated.

Mr. TAVENNER. Did you attend any meeting of the Communist Party at which Ed Biberman and David Hilberman and Bernyce Fleury, or any one of them was present?

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline on the grounds of the first and fifth amendments to discuss any kind of associations.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Chairman, may I ask that if possible counsel might make it somewhat definite, any meetings and what period he had in mind?

Mr. TAVENNER. My question is whether you attended one at any time?

Mr. McNULTY. Then the answer will stand, I take it.

Mr. TAVENNER. Will you answer the question now?

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline on constitutional grounds to discuss this type of question.

Mr. TAVENNER. Were you aware of the existence of an organized group of the Communist Party made up principally of artists from the cartoonist and painters' field while you were in Hollywood prior to your entry into the Armed Forces of the United States?

(Witness consulted his counsel.)

Mr. HUBLEY. Well, it is a question regarding politics and I will stand on the same grounds as previously stated.

Mr. TAVENNER. Are you now a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. HUBLEY. I would reply on the same grounds to that question or a question of whether I was a Democrat, Republican, or anything else.

Mr. TAVENNER. I was afraid that that was your conception, probably, of the Communist Party, when you spoke of politics. It has been demonstrated by testimony before this committee over long periods of time, and it has been demonstrated by findings of fact by the Congress of the United States, and by the Federal courts that the Communist Party is not a political party in the sense that we understand the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, for instance, to be political parties.

So, that may alter your decision as to whether or not you will answer these questions if we make it plain to you it is not a political party. The Communist Party has been held to be a conspiratorial apparatus, and it is not a political party.

With that explanation, will you change your replies?

Mr. HUBLEY. I think it is still a matter of opinion, legal or otherwise.

Mr. TAVENNER. Then, because you consider it a political party the same as a Democratic or Republican Party, you refuse to testify?

(Witness consulted his counsel.)

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline to answer that question on all grounds.

Mr. TAVENNER. On the grounds previously asserted by you?

Mr. HUBLEY. Yes.

Mr. TAVENNER. Were you a member of the Communist Party while living in Hollywood?

Mr. HUBLEY. This is the same form of question, it seems to me, and I will invoke the constitutional privileges again.

Mr. TAVENNER. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Jackson, do you have any questions?

Mr. JACKSON. I think not, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DOYLE. I have one.

We have evidence from other witnesses who were at one time members of the Communist conspiracy, artists and painters, and so forth, from Hollywood and other places. At times their artistical interests were directed in order to put across a certain message sponsored by Soviet communism, rather than art for art's sake. That, of course, is one of the purposes of this question, fundamentally to see if we can get your help, as an artist, to understand the extent, if in your experience, communism tried or succeeded in directing your specialized talents to put across a certain communistic message rather than art for art's sake.

I am making that statement to you as one man to another because our field as your Congressman is to try to discover ways in which that was done, and from your experience if at all, learn how Congress may undertake to more intelligently and efficiently legislate or handle the problem.

That is not politics, it is art. I want to ask you very frankly, in the field of art, if you can help us understand or learn in what way, the Communists sought, through your talented ability to influence a message other than just for art's sake? Is that a fair question to you?

Mr. HUBLEY. I have a lot of opinions about art as well as I am sure all artists do and it is an endless discussion and I do not think that this would serve purpose here. I would like to simply say in answer to that, that I have 30 years of creative work and that I stand on that.

It is public work, and anyone is welcome to examine it and to look at it, and I stand on my work, and not on my opinions. My opinions can change, and I have changed them many times, all through my life, and I like the right we have to be able to change them. But the work stands. I have no shame about it. If anyone wants to examine it, it is there.

Mr. DOYLE. Now, did you feel that any of your creative work was the result of the infiltration or influence or the pressures or the promulgation of the Communist influence in Hollywood? Did you reproduce any creative work in whole or in part as a result of any Communist infiltration in your own consciousness?

Mr. HUBLEY. My work has been my own work, and my own talent, and my own opinions.

Mr. DOYLE. Was that work influenced by Communist pressure directly or indirectly? Was your creative work a result of your opinion which was shaped in whole or in part by the influence of communism which you may have been surrounded in whole or in part?

Mr. HUBLEY. There are many influences on every person, and the ones on me were many, and I do not know. Your question is not very specific. As I told you, when you are discussing Communist ideas, I do not believe it is the proper kind of a question here, and I have declined to state opinions or otherwise in this area. That is on constitutional grounds.

Mr. DOYLE. I am always disappointed as a Member of Congress and a fellow citizen when a person such as you with particular creative ability, does not take the opportunity to help your Congress understand more in detail the extent to which communism has infiltrated in your particular art or craft.

I am just stating that to you as one man to another. It is again a case where I recognize a great creative ability, and of course, we would not be calling you this morning if we did not have an idea, a rather definite idea, that you could help us.

Mr. HUBLEY. Well, I would like to say, and it may be a help or not, that this creative ability that you recognize can only flourish in a climate of complete freedom and complete free ability to explore and to think and to experiment.

Mr. DOYLE. We have abundant testimony by former active Communists in your field, in the field of music and in the field of literature that they do not have or did not experience, while they were members of the Communist group, complete freedom. That is one of the things that we are trying to understand, so that we can help protect our Nation more thoroughly against the infiltration and the taking away of complete freedom.

Mr. JACKSON. I have several questions to ask to clear the record.

Of course, I think that there is an abundance of testimony that indicates that anyone who is in the Communist Party as an artist had absolutely no freedom, and he was in a mental philosophical strait-jacket.

However, there is sworn testimony before the committee that you were in fact a member of the Communist Party. Is that testimony true or false?

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline to answer the question.

Mr. JACKSON. The testimony also indicates that you attended closed meetings of the Communist Party. Is that testimony true or false?

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline to answer on the previous grounds.

Mr. JACKSON. Did you contribute your talents in any way to the Communist Party or the Communist-front organizations?

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline to answer.

Mr. JACKSON. For the reasons previously stated?

Mr. HUBLEY. Yes.

Mr. JACKSON. Did you contribute funds to the Communist Party, directly or indirectly, or to any Communist-front organization?

Mr. HUBLEY. I decline to answer.

Mr. JACKSON. Are you today a member of the Communist Party?

Mr. HUBLEY. This question is again, I feel, the same kind of infringement that the others were, and I invoke the privilege of the first and the fifth amendments.

Mr. JACKSON. I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman. But I move the release of the testimony of the witness, subject to the will of the full committee.

Mr. DOYLE. Let the record so show.

Are there any other questions?

Mr. TAVENNER. I have no other questions.

Mr. DOYLE. Thank you, Mr. Counsel, and the witness.

(Thereupon, at 12:10 p. m., Thursday, July 5, 1956, the executive hearing of the witness adjourned.)

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