

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

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TO: Director, FBI

DATE: February 13, 1951

FROM: SAC, Los Angeles

SUBJECT: COMPIC; EDWARD DMYTRYK  
SECURITY MATTER - C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 10-21-99 BY 60267 NLS/DEC/BJK

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On February 6, 1951 [redacted] the Independent Motion Picture Producers Association, telephonically advised me that DMYTRYK was desirous of obtaining employment in the motion picture industry, and the suggestion had been made to him that he come to the office of the FBI in order to make a statement which it was thought would be an indication to prospective employers that he was cooperative with the government. [redacted] related that the industry did not necessarily desire to bar DMYTRYK from any employment whatever, but producers were very skeptical about employing him without some type of clearance. It was pointed out to [redacted] that I would be glad to receive DMYTRYK if he desired to come to the office, but that no inference was to be drawn by anyone from his appearance here; that the FBI is not in a position to grant any clearance and none should be inferred from the fact that he might come here for an interview; furthermore, no information would be forthcoming to anyone concerning the nature of his visit if such were made. [redacted] stated that he was sorry the FBI could not be of assistance in connection with the matter, but he appreciated our position and stated he would accompany DMYTRYK. An appointment was made for February 8, 1951 at the office.

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On that date DMYTRYK came alone to the office and was interviewed by the writer and SA [redacted]. At the outset of the interview DMYTRYK stated that he came here voluntarily to furnish us with any information in his possession, the suggestion that he come here having been made by an unofficial group of persons in the motion picture business, most of whom were members of the Motion Picture Alliance and who, according to him, act as a rather unofficial clearing body for the independent producers.

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DMYTRYK related that he had joined the Communist Political Association, and he distinguished this from the Party, shortly after Stalingrad when the relationship between this country and Russia was apparently very friendly, and he allegedly joined because of intellectual curiosity. He stated he was somewhat familiar with Marxism although he found MARX impossible to read, personally.

RBH:MES

- 100-15732 (COMPIC)
- cc: 100-22566 (DMYTRYK)
- 100-21068 [redacted]
- 100-8864 [redacted]
- 100-20076 [redacted]
- 100-6769 (H. BIBERMAN)
- 100-19389 (JARRICO)
- 100-22928 [redacted]
- 100-20095 (PEPPER)
- 100-20411 [redacted]
- 100-18421 (BESSIE)
- 100-23179 [redacted]
- 100-1804 (TUTTLE)
- 100-23030 [redacted]
- 100-8887 [redacted]
- 100-21198 (LAWSON)
- 100-20655 [redacted]
- 100-7905 (MALTZ)
- 100-18355 (A.S.P.)
- 100-23042 [redacted]
- 100-22505 [redacted]
- 62-2357 [redacted]
- 100-19548 [redacted]
- 100-7454 [redacted]
- 61-541 [redacted]
- 100-32588 [redacted]
- 100-18800 (ROSSEN)
- 100-20383 [redacted]
- 100-3962 [redacted]

100-335472

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He was invited to what turned out to be a Communist meeting held in San Fernando Valley, and then soon after attended another meeting in the same area. One of these meetings was at the home of [redacted]. He thereafter attended several meetings in the Hollywood area of Los Angeles. He claims that he never actually attended more than about five Communist meetings, and he denies that he knows the other residences at which these meetings were held. He names the following persons as having been in attendance at some of these meetings but he cannot distinguish specifically which gatherings they attended: BRIAN MARLOW (deceased), [redacted], HERBERT BIBERMAN, PAUL JARRICO, [redacted], [redacted] GEORGE PEPPER, and [redacted].

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He advises that normally only six or seven persons were present at these particular meetings. ALVAH BESSIE spoke at one of them, and after attending the first meeting DMYTRYK was invited to sign up with the CPA. He believed that HERBERT BIBERMAN was actually the one to ask him to join the Communist Political Association. He was invited to attend a meeting at which the negro question was to be discussed in detail. He states this is the type of discussion that really interested him for he has seen a great deal of oppression, misery and the plight of various minorities, and the study of such problems and their ultimate solution vitally interested him. He states this was the time when the Party, under the leadership of EARL BROWDER, was following its doctrine of enlightened capitalism, and he was anxious to study this development. On questioning he did state that one of the Communist Party meetings was held at the home of FRANK TUTTLE, who is a motion picture director.

DMYTRYK states that he believes he signed three separate applications for membership in the Communist Political Association or the Communist Party. He had some receipts in this connection but destroyed them at the time, not desiring to have them found, indicating that he then felt it was somewhat of a conspiracy and was not the sort of thing that would be understood by persons who might know of his membership. He states that the last time he joined the Party [redacted] requested him to sign, bringing the card to DMYTRYK at his home. He places this late in 1945 after the Communist Party had been re-established. He states that in his own mind he had really ceased to be a member at this time, but had never formally declared himself and went ahead and signed the card when presented to him by [redacted]. To emphasize the casualness of this occasion DMYTRYK recalled that he was washing his car in the driveway at home and signed the card in front of the house without any prolonged discussion.

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He states that he had never paid the regular weekly dues into the Party, but may possibly have given as much as \$5.00 in cash on an occasion or two, but states that he never did make any real contributions. However, after he had severed his connection with the Party, PAUL JARRICO, on one occasion, brought two men to visit him. Allegedly both were from New York. One was tall, thin-faced, and had piercing eyes. They stated they were after a fund of at least \$100,000.00 for the Party, and after much discussion, in order to get rid of them he promised \$1,000.00 which he never gave. He pointed out at this time he was on a \$25.00-a-week allowance from his business manager and could not have made any real contributions to the Party without disclosing it.

DMYTRYK related that early in 1945 he was advised by ADRIAN SCOTT to go with him to a meeting at the home of FRANCIS FARAGOH. Another meeting, which [redacted] also attended, was attended by a [redacted] (possibly [redacted]), [redacted] and was held at the home of [redacted] although the latter was not present at any time. This was a political discussion group, and DMYTRYK states he felt considerably out of place not being able to engage in the theoretical discussions which were under the leadership of JOHN HOWARD LAWSON. He states that he attended two such meetings and then, because of differences of opinion with LAWSON, DMYTRYK feels that he, from that time on, was never really accepted into the Party. The difficulties arose over the treatment of a story entitled, "Cornered", which was being made into a motion picture by DMYTRYK and ADRIAN SCOTT. ALBERT MALTZ came to see SCOTT and DMYTRYK and informed them that they were treating this story wrong and endeavored to have it afforded story treatment in line with Communist principles. DMYTRYK and SCOTT stated the story could not be so handled, and he refused to change it. JOHN HOWARD LAWSON attended several discussions concerning "Cornered" and told DMYTRYK he was undisciplined because he would not change the movie as suggested by LAWSON. It was as a result that ALBERT MALTZ wrote a series of articles for "New Masses" which he was later required by the Party to repudiate.

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DMYTRYK stated that HERBERT BIBERMAN did not participate in the political discussion groups just mentioned, and it was understood that he had a similar group of his own. From this time on DMYTRYK stated that he really had no contact with Party members and although he had not formally or officially withdrawn from the Party, he had done so and apparently it was so regarded by the Party inasmuch as he was not contacted at all.

He stated that at no time was there ever any discussion relative to the overthrow of the government and he was never solicited to carry out any type of a mission for the Party, and he never met any individuals who came from other sections of the country except the two men from New York mentioned heretofore. DMYTRYK states that he never used any name other than his own in connection with any Party activities.

DMYTRYK states that at the invitation of FRANK TUTTLE he was asked to participate in the school conducted in Hollywood by the People's Educational Center. He states he did not know that the Party controlled it at that time, and he was solely interested in the technical phases of motion picture direction and not politics at this school. He states he also lectured at the Actors Lab, which he knows is regarded as a front group. He was a member of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization and participated on several panels in discussions sponsored by that group, but again they were of a technical nature. He admits that he allowed his name to be used as a sponsor for the American Youth for Democracy. He claims not to know what the group stood for politically, and was informed that it was an organization to render assistance to the young wives of war veterans, and he was solicited by two unknown women who came to his residence. He claims not to know their identities.

He states he was elected to the Executive Board of Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of Arts, Sciences & Professions, and attended a few meetings. He states definitely this was subsequent to his withdrawal from the Communist Party, and he regarded the HICASP as a broad progressive movement headed by what he thought were strong progressives. He cited HOWARD KOCH as the type of non-Communist extremely active in HICASP. He further identified GEORGE PEPPER as one of the motivating forces in HICASP at the time.

DMYTRYK states that when he and ADRIAN SCOTT were served with subpoenas by the House Un-American Committee they were glad of the opportunity to express their positions. Both were then employed at RKO Studios. SCOTT decided to employ BARTLEY CRUM of San Francisco as his attorney, and DMYTRYK decided to also employ him, and they informed CRUM fully of their Party membership and activities. They did not have much cash between them and after the other persons had been served with their subpoenas the association with them and the formation of the group known as the "Hollywood 19" came about. This was never an official group actually, and the only semblance of real organization came about as a result of a meeting held at the home of EDWARD G. ROBINSON. ROBINSON was not present at this time though [redacted] was in the house. Senator CLAUDE PEPPER of Florida was in attendance at the meeting, and he told about the activities of the House Un-American Committee and advised them to fight the Committee. DMYTRYK states that HERBERT BIBERMAN, ADRIAN SCOTT, [redacted] and IRVING PICHEL were also present. He stated that in his opinion PICHEL is not a Communist. A subsequent meeting of the group was held at the home of [redacted]. Not all of the so-called "Hollywood 19" were at this meeting or the subsequent one held at the home of [redacted].

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Some of those under subpoena had retained Attorneys [redacted] and [redacted]. Others retained Attorney [redacted] and still others had counseled with [redacted]. He states that there definitely was no conspiracy among the group on the individual positions that they were to take before the Committee. DMYTRYK definitely feels that [redacted] and [redacted] were under the sponsorship of the Communist Party. He pointed out that the financial problem was a considerable one to the group, and remarked that ALVAH BESSIE and SAMUEL ORNITZ had absolutely no money and were carried entirely by the Committee, as was BERT BRECHT. He stated that some individuals who had participated in the meetings dropped out altogether, for example, IRVING PICHEL.

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He stated that ROBERT ROSSEN, who is openly a Communist, was not at any meeting when DMYTRYK was there. He stated that as it turned out, the real legal work was performed by [redacted] and [redacted] and that [redacted] apparently went along for the ride as he did considerable drinking and performed very little services. He stated that BARTLEY CRUM was of the opinion

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that they should answer all questions put to them by the Committee, but [redacted] finally came up with the strategy that was followed, and that even [redacted] gave the appearance of going along with [redacted] DMYTRYK states positively that he would never have gone along and followed the legal advice of [redacted] had he foreseen the consequences of his act, for he certainly never intended to become so involved in a legal fight and be threatened with and subsequently serve a jail sentence. He says he believed that legally they were right, and he said that a meeting was held with [redacted] [redacted] and [redacted] and at this time [redacted] stated that the motion picture industry was behind the group and felt that they were doing right, and then just a few days later after [redacted] had testified, he made a complete switch in his position. DMYTRYK cites this as proof of the fact that he felt he was getting good advice. He indicated that he still believed had Justices MURPHY and RUTLEDGE been on the Supreme Court his position would have been upheld.

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In general discussion with DMYTRYK it was learned that in his opinion [redacted] both of whom had been Communist Party members, might be in such a frame of mind that they would be willing to talk to the FBI. He is not certain what position ADRIAN SCOTT might take at this time. No statement was made that any approach would be made to these persons by this office.

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DMYTRYK is divorced from one wife and is presently remarried, and he stated that his first wife is not a member of the Party and objected to his participation and activity. His second wife, he states is not a Party member and never did anything but to work for his behalf as a member of the "Wives of the Hollywood 10."

DMYTRYK states that he presently resides at 8338 DeLongpre, Hollywood 36, California, with home telephone HEMPstead 3709. His agent is [redacted] of Famous Artists. DMYTRYK evidenced a friendly attitude and stated that he would be available to meet with Agents at any time for further discussion of any of the above matters or anything else we might desire to question him about.

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FBI memo on Edward Dmytryk, February 13, 1951.