Interview of Paul Jarrico Hollywood Blacklist: Paul Jarrico

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JULY 29, 1988

LARRY CEPLAIR

Why don't we start by telling me when and where you were born and what your family background was like.

PAUL JARRICO

I was born in Los Angeles, California, on January 12, 1915. My father and mother were both Russian Jews who emigrated to the United States about the turn of the century. I believe my father arrived in 1904 and my mother perhaps a bit before that. They met in New York, and my mother was at that time married to someone else. My father apparently courted her, followed her to Denver and Los Angeles, and her husband died fairly soon thereafter of tuberculosis, which in fact was the reason why she had come west. It was then believed that sunshine was a good cure for tuberculosis, which was then rampant, especially among the sweatshop workers of New York. Subsequently, she and my father were married. She had had two children by her first husband who were much older than I: my half brother and my half sister. My half sister subsequently died of tuberculosis, in fact, in 1921, when I was six and she was twenty-one.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What were their names?

PAUL JARRICO

My sister's name was Rose Kraus. My half brother, who's still alive--but barely; he's now eighty- nine--is Edward Kraus. (

[He died soon after this interview.]

Mr. Jarrico added the following bracketed section during his review of the transcript.

)

LARRY CEPLAIR

And your father's and mother's names?

PAUL JARRICO

My father's name was Aaron Shapiro, and after their marriage my mother became Jennie Shapiro. She was born Bernstein. Bernstein was her maiden

name. The tuberculosis connection is significant because my father was one of the founders of an organization called the Jewish Consumptive Relief Association. The Jewish community in Los Angeles was quite small, but it was taxed beyond its capacity by the influx of Jews from New York suffering from tuberculosis. It was part of their culture to help their fellows, and they started a sanatorium out in the desert near Duarte, California, originally just a group of tents, really. That became a very famous institution called the City of Hope, which is now the center of research in cancer, tuberculosis having in theory been licked. At any rate, I came from a family of do-gooders, to use a phrase whose pejorative overtones I've never been able to understand. They were socialists. They were Zionists, left Zionists. My father had been a militant opponent of czarism in Russia, and particularly because for him czarism meant anti-Semitism, active anti-Semitism, pogroms in which the Jewish communities were attacked, in some cases massacred. He was very proud of the fact that he at the age of eighteen had organized a Jewish self-defense corps in his hometown, which was Kharkov, a large city in the Ukraine. Because the young Jews of that community had armed themselves and made their readiness for pogroms public, there was no pogrom in Kharkov. His father, he told me, had given him a gun. This was part of the pride he took in his own militant history as an activist, and in fact he remained an activist of one sort or another.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was he a member of the Social-Democratic Party when he was in Russia?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I'm a little unclear on-- Yes, but I'm a little unclear on the various divisions. There was a division called the Bund, and I believe he was part of that. There were differences not only among socialists in general but among Jewish socialists, between people who believed in emigrating, in building a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and those who believed that the first duty of a socialist--of a Jewish socialist, as of other socialistsn--was to stay right where they were and fight against czarism. These divisions were very strong. I mean, they were really enmities, divisions which continued into the Jewish community, even the Jewish left community, in the United States. Not necessarily taking that form, but the differences between those who said they

were Jews first, and socialists second, or Jews second and socialists first were quite strong. I remember asking my father which he felt was primary, and he wasn't glib about it. He recognized that it was a real issue, but for him he decided that being a Jew came first. He was a Jew not simply politically but culturally. He was what was called a Yiddishist.Another division was between those who thought that Yiddish should be the language of the Jews and those who thought Hebrew should be the language of the Jews. In general, those who were on the side of Yiddish argued that Yiddish was the language of the common people, and that also became therefore a political issue. When Israel was founded, or even before it was founded, when the Zionist movement began to be strong and to populate Palestine increasingly, the question of what was to be the language of this new state became a pressing question, again a political question. My father was unhappy that the Hebraists (or however that would be pronounced) were the victor: those who felt that we should return to the language of our ancestors.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did he have a trade or a profession when he was in Russia?

PAUL JARRICO

He was a student, and because again of anti-Semitism, he apparently was unable to get the degree he wanted in what I guess we would call lycée, or at least what the French would call lycée, an advanced secondary school. Or to get into a university. But he was a good student. In fact, I seem to remember that he made some money tutoring students who were able to continue with conventional education. But he had no profession, no.He studied when he got here. When he settled in Los Angeles, he began to study for the bar and within a few years was able to pass the bar and to become an attorney. His brother [Chaim Shapiro] had preceded him as a law student, though his brother was somewhat younger, and they became a well-known firm, Shapiro and Shapiro, in the Los Angeles area, defending basically poor people, trade unions when trade unions were small and embattled rather than large and institutionalized, immigrants threatened with expulsion and deportation. [There were] lots of deportation cases that they fought against, especially during and after the Palmer raids, immediately after the First World War. They were left-wing

lawyers and people's lawyers. Didn't make much money, but again were very pleased with their function. I mean, they were really good people.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did your father become a member of the American Socialist Party?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. My father and mother were both active in the campaigns of the Socialist Party before the war, especially in the campaign to elect Job Harriman mayor of Los Angeles in I believe-- I forget whether it was 1910 or 1912. At any rate, it was the same time as the explosion which wrecked the Los Angeles Times, for which the McNamara brothers [John and James] were put on trial, and that whole story of how Lincoln Steffens and others arranged a deal in which the McNamara brothers pleaded guilty in order to avoid execution in a sort of plea bargain. The drama involved the fact that this was just before the election and because the socialists had conducted a great campaign to free the McNamaras, claiming that they were framed and that they were innocent. This campaign was tied in very, very closely with their campaign to win the job of mayor for Job Harriman. The unexpected confession of the McNamaras ruined the election campaign and ruined his chances, though they had been very good. In that period of American history, there were several people who had been elected. Several socialists had been elected to offices of that sort: mayor and assemblymen and so on. I think Milwaukee had a socialist mayor and so on. So the Socialist Party was quite strong, and my parents were very definitely very active in the party, yes.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Were they Debsian socialists? I mean, was [Eugene V.] Debs their--?

PAUL JARRICO

Debs was certainly their hero. Again, one of my memories as a child--I must have been--If it was the 1920 election--No, I guess he was still in jail in the 1920 election, so it would have been the 1924 election. At any rate, I do recall Debs speaking to a huge crowd in a big park in northeastern Los Angeles--Lincoln Park I believe it was --from a platform. I recall my father lifting me up

so I could shake hands with Gene Debs, and it was something to remember and something I do remember.

LARRY CEPLAIR

He was quite an old man, and he was at that time. He didn't live too much longer than that--did he?-- as I recall.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I'd have to look up the year. It's possible that it was between elections, and that was neither 1920 nor 1924 but somewhere in between. I know that was after he had been pardoned and he was out of jail. I know that he was on a tour that in my mind I connected--I now connect--with an election campaign.

LARRY CEPLAIR

How did your father go from Shapiro to Jarrico?

PAUL JARRICO

My father didn't. I did. I was born Israel Shapiro, and I changed my name when I was twenty-two years old and just trying to get started as a film writer, a screenwriter. This was in the year or so after I graduated from college. I had written a story and managed to interest someone, a writer, who had managed to interest an agent. The agent, who had the obviously Jewish name of Nat Goldstone, suggested that my name might perhaps be too Jewish, though he didn't quite put it that way. But that's what he meant. I changed my name at that time.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Why Jarrico? Where did that come from?

PAUL JARRICO

I made it up. I wanted it to be memorable. I thought that was a name that was distinctive. I wanted it to sound biblical, I think because I didn't want people to think I had changed my name to avoid being known as Jewish. I spelled it peculiarly: I used the vowels of the name Shapiro in the same order, and I also spelled it peculiarly so it wouldn't seem to be a made-up name. I don't know. I had all kinds of peculiar-- These are unimportant at this point, since I've used that name now for fifty-one years or more. At first, I used it only

professionally, but it quickly became my personal name as well. If I had to do it over again, I probably would not have done it, or at least I would have spelled it the way this town of Jericho is spelled, which would have avoided a certain amount of misspellings that have pursued me.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What was it like growing up in your parents' house?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, it was-- I consider myself to have been very lucky. I didn't realize I was lucky at that time. But it was a house full of political and cultural discussion and a good deal of good feeling: laughter, jokes, songs, a lot of friends. It was a good environment for me, for a young man, for a kid growing up. I was really very fortunate.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was your mother an educated woman?

PAUL JARRICO

No, not really, not compared with my father, certainly. She was not uneducated in Yiddish. That is to say, she read quite widely in Yiddish, but she never quite learned English sufficiently. I remember her working hard to learn how to leave a properly written note to the milkman and so on. My father, on the other hand, had a very good knowledge of Russian literature as well as Yiddish literature, Hebrew literature, English literature. He had more educational advantages than she had, and he really knew four languages well. It didn't impress me at that time, but now again looking back at it, the fact that having come to this country at the age of eighteen or nineteen or so, he learned English well enough to become a lawyer in fairly short order-- It seems to me now, looking back at it, quite remarkable. Especially since there was a kind of reversal many, many years later when I became an émigré and went to France, knew only a little French, and never mastered the language, even though I was there off and on for close to twenty years. So I appreciated-- My father did speak with an accent, but he did know English well.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you have brothers and sisters?

PAUL JARRICO

No, I was raised as an only child, because as I indicated earlier, my half brother and half sister were much older than I. Though I should modify that. My brother was out of the house by the time I was growing up, and my sister was in the house, though she was twenty-one when I was six, twenty-one when she died. So in that sense, I did have a sibling.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Where did you live? Where did the family live?

PAUL JARRICO

We lived in various places. The family lived, when I was born, on Arlington Street near I guess Venice Boulevard. My father and mother had a small grocery store at that point. My father was still studying law. They moved to Sierra Madre before I could remember, so my earliest memories were of Sierra Madre. They had moved there because of my sister's tuberculosis. And I remember living there when I was quite young: three years old, four years old, perhaps five. Though I think I was five when we moved to Boyle Heights, which was just east of the Los Angeles River. There was a concentration of Jews living in that area, which is no longer true. It has become a completely Latino area now. And that's where I grew up. I mean, most of my memories of being young have to do with Boyle Heights. I went to grammar school there, junior high there, high school there, and graduated from high school there. So that was really my part of Los Angeles as a kid growing up.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was Roosevelt [High School] the high school?

PAUL JARRICO

Roosevelt was the high school. Hollenbeck Junior High [School] was the junior high. Roosevelt, really the minorities were the majority there. Not just Jews, but Russians and Japanese and Chicanos and a few Anglos--but basically Jews.

LARRY CEPLAIR

That was an exciting place, wasn't it? I mean, it was sort of a full-blown community, wasn't it, Boyle Heights?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, it was. My father really wanted to be there, because he felt himself very much a part of the community and in fact was a spokesman for the community, a leader of the community. But that was his constituency, so to speak. In a sense we had more money than most of our neighbors. I remember because my father was a lawyer he was respected, and though he was certainly not rich by any standard, we had somewhat more money than our immediate neighbors did.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So you could have lived somewhere else had you chosen?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. That's the point I'm sort of trying to make: that it was a choice. It was a political choice, one might say, to be part of the community.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Were you a member of a temple as well?

PAUL JARRICO

No, my father was irreligious. He was a card-carrying atheist, though he-- You may find this a contradiction. He was very, very devoted to Jewish culture but not at all to the Jewish religion. I don't think I've-- I think I was in a temple once when my father went to speak to make some sort of appeal, political appeal, and I went with him. That was my only exposure to the Jewish religion.

LARRY CEPLAIR

You said elsewhere that he was perhaps the most important influence on you. What did you get from him?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, if I had a role model, I guess, in the most traditional sense of the phrase-- He was open, he was active, he was a very good-natured person, he was-- I grew up thinking that everybody's father went to meetings every night. I mean, it took a while to understand that he was really unique. No, the sense of social values, of social conscience, came directly from him and to a lesser

extent from my mother. My mother was, in her younger days, a follower or at least an admirer of Emma Goldman, and it's interesting to me that the highest praise my mother had for anyone was to say, “Er iz ah radikahler mench,” meaning, “He is a radical person.” That for her was not sectarian at all. That covered any kind of radicalism. That was socialist, communist, Trotskyites, or for that matter, anarchist, vegetarian, believer in free love. It was quite catholic, [laughter] as it were.

LARRY CEPLAIR

When the Socialist Party split in 1920, did your father remain a socialist?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, and he was very much a socialist and not a communist. When I started to become a communist, which was only a short while before he died-- He died at the very, very end, the last day of 1933. Hitler had come to power in January of '33. I was then a college student. I was a sophomore at UCLA during '33-'34. I had started at USC [University of Southern California]. I was a freshman there in '32-'33. But in '33, in the fall of '33, I was becoming increasingly radicalized. That is to say, I was increasingly dissatisfied with the socialist position about-- It wasn't so much that the socialist position about Hitlerism was different from the communist position. They were both anti-Hitler but the socialists blamed the communists for the rise of Hitler and the communists blamed the socialists for the rise of Hitler, and they were really at each other's throats. Since I was becoming increasingly drawn to the communists, not simply on the anti-Nazi question but on the question of militancy about unemployment, about American social reality, impatient with the gradualism of socialists, it led to conflicts between me and my father. They were not bitter conflicts, but they were sometimes noisy conflicts. I mean, we argued. He was amused and a bit scornful about the beginning of my illusions about Russia, because he would tell me that the good communists had been wiped out not simply by the rise of Stalin but long before that--I mean by Lenin. The good revolutionaries or a lot of the good revolutionaries had been. And he was really very much the defender of the socialist line as against the communist line. I recall when he was dying. We didn't know he was dying. It came rather quickly. He went into the hospital for a gall bladder operation and he developed peritonitis, which would not have happened a few years later

when antibiotics came into use. Within a really short time, within two weeks after he was hospitalized, he was dead. But in those final days, when he was already beginning to suffer from the poisoning of his system and he was not quite as lucid as he generally was, I was reading a book called **Germany Enters the Third Reich** by a man named Calvin B. Hoover, who was, I guess one would say, nonpolitical. That is to say, he was neither a socialist nor a communist, but a fairly good reporter. He seemed to bear out my position in the argument, that is to say, to put more of the blame on the socialists than on the communists. I remember reading sections of this book to my father in a kind of a triumphant argument, again with a good spirit. He was having difficulty answering me, because his illness was by that time fatal, though I didn't know that yet. But that was a very interesting-- Again, I guess one could find a lot of symbolism in this: a man on his deathbed trying to answer his son's argument in a critical discussion.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What had been his objection to communism? I mean, clearly, he must have thought about it after the revolution and made a decision to remain a socialist.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, it would have been the same objection that a lot of socialists had in Russia itself, where they had felt that the communists had seized power from the [Aleksandr] Kerensky government, had said, “All power to the soviet”-- Because the communists were strong in the Soviets, and after winning power with that slogan, they had taken the power away from the soviet. If one reads--as I did many, many years later--a book called **The Practice and Theory of Communism** by Bertrand Russell, written in 1919, some eighteen months after the revolution, you could find all the arguments against the communist rule that some of us began to think about in 1956 and a great many years later. [laughter] So I suppose, though I never had a chance to go back and really question my father about these things when I became more sophisticated about them, that his objections would have been very similar to those of Bertrand Russell.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What were your interests when you were growing up in junior high school and high school? What sorts of things did you do?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I was a high school journalist and I was a high school orator. I guess both of these things stemmed from my father as role model, too. He wanted me to follow in his footsteps, become a lawyer. Being a public speaker, being able to speak publicly, was something important to him. I remember his coaching me when I was a freshman in high school and had won the right to represent Roosevelt High School in a citywide oratorical contest sponsored by the [**Los Angeles**]**Herald**-- I guess it wasn't called the **Herald Examiner** at that time, but it was a [William Randolph] Hearst paper, the **Herald**. And I came in fourth citywide, though I was-- Most of the competitors were juniors and seniors and not freshmen. I was referred to in the newspaper as "Little Israel," and indeed I was little. I mean, I hadn't achieved my growth yet. But then the following year, I came in second and almost won. The third year I lost the right to represent my school, because I failed to win the contest within the school. [laughter] The reason I failed was that the subject that year was the Olympic Games. It was 1932, and it was the first time the Olympics were held in Los Angeles. My speech was an attack on the hypocrisy of the Olympic Games, [laughter] which was not calculated to win contests that year. But anyway, to answer your question, I had won some reputation during my three years of high school as an orator, not only in the **Herald** contest but in something similar called the constitutional-- I forget what auspices it was, but there were contests and orations about the Constitution. There again under the influences of my father, though by this time I was beginning to read stuff on my own and to get some knowledge of things on my own. I wrote a speech and gave a speech about Tom Paine, and again that was out of the mainstream of-- But I didn't lose in that contest, as I recall. Then writing, and writing essentially took the form of journalism. I became literary editor of the high school paper, editor of the high school yearbook. But writing always seemed important to me, because writing was-- Again, looking back at it, I would say probably because writing was so highly respected in my family. I mean, my father was very proud of the fact that he knew many of the leading Jewish writers. He himself wrote poetry in Russian, Hebrew, Jewish, and English. The stuff in English is not particularly good as poetry. But,

nevertheless, that was certainly something that was natural for me to want to do. So I was active in school organizations. I was president of the World Friendship Club and I forget what else. I ran for boys vice president once and didn't win, but I was a fairly sociable kid, except in athletics, where I was not particularly gifted, though I did try to run around the track a few times.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you ever join the Young [People's] Socialist League? The YPSL? Wasn't that what it was called?

PAUL JARRICO

No, I never, never did. I had friends who were YPSL. I may have gone to a meeting or two, but I don't remember being active. Among the many organizations that my father was active in was the Workmen's Circle, which was a fraternal organization. They had-- Well, we formed a sort of young people's adjunct or club within the organization called the Circle Culture Club, and I was active in that in high school. My father had organized or helped organize a Yiddish Folkshule. He was very anxious for me to learn Yiddish and other Jewish kids to learn Yiddish. And I was a bad boy. I got expelled from this school that my father had organized for not being sufficiently disciplined, which was a kind of minor scandal. Not much of a scandal, but nevertheless I'm sure a disappointment to my father, who nevertheless-- Well, I did learn some Yiddish, not much, but I did learn some. Unfortunately, I never learned any Russian. I later regretted that, because my father and mother would speak Yiddish between themselves and I got to understand pretty well what they were saying, but then when they didn't want me to understand, they'd speak Russian, and I never broke that code. I was a fairly popular kid and fairly happy.

1.2. TAPE NUMBER: I, SIDE TWO

JULY 29, 1988

LARRY CEPLAIR

When you were graduated from high school, you were intending to be a writer. Is that correct? Or it wasn't that clear at that point?

PAUL JARRICO

No. I would say probably I intended to be a lawyer, but the conflict between the ambition to write and the ambition to be a lawyer may very well have started by that time, and it intensified during my four years of college, since I continued writing. I was a college journalist, at least during my first couple of years, and then started writing short stories quite seriously, or at least working hard at them, and even started in my senior year working on a novel. So increasingly, I wanted to be a writer, but I also had more or less grown up with the notion that I would become a lawyer. Though, as I said, my father had died when I was still in my sophomore year. After my third year, which was spent at the University of California, Berkeley-- Which was an exciting year because it was a very politically significant year, but I'll get back to that later. I had gone to USC--gone back to USC--because at that time USC was the only class-A school, I believe, in the country, or certainly one of the very few, where it was possible to enter law school after only three years of prelegal, where one didn't need the fourth year of prelegal. The arrangement they had was that at the end of your first year of law school, they would give you an A.B., and I thought, “Well, I'll graduate from college and I'll have one year of law under my belt, and at that time, I'll decide whether to go on with law or not.” I had the illusion that I could write and study law at the same time. It took me about three weeks to realize that that was impossible. Law school required twelve hours of work a day. So I made my decision at that point, after three weeks of law school, and I tried to get them to give me my tuition back. They wouldn't do it, [laughter] but they would permit me to transfer to Letters, Arts, and Science. So I transferred to Letters, Arts, and Science and then took the easiest courses I could find and spent most of my energy and time working in fact on that novel. I'd been encouraged by a man who taught writing at Cal up at Berkeley during my junior year to think that I might win a fellowship. I think it was called the Phelan fellowship [James D. Phelan Award in Literature], and I think it still goes on. The requirement was a substantial piece of work. So I was working on that substantial piece of work, which was the first, long chapter of a novel, plus an outline of where I was going. In fact, when I graduated I did not get the fellowship. I think I was told that I placed second. Also, at about the same time, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer [Inc. (MGM)] asked [Rufus] von KleinSmid, who was then the head of USC, to recommend somebody for a junior writer's job, and he turned over the request to an

English teacher named [Frank] Baxter, who was in fact the teacher of one of the few courses that I actually took an interest in. So Baxter asked me if I would be interested, and I said-- I hadn't really thought of being a screenwriter. I really had not. But this notion of a junior writer's job at MGM appealed to me a lot. By that time, I was married. The junior writer's job would pay $35 a week, which was not a hell of a lot of money but was not a terrible salary in 1936. I submitted some material, had an interview at MGM with a man named [Edwin H.] Knopf, related to the publishing family. It took him or him and his colleagues some three months to decide in favor of others and not in favor of me. In other words, I didn't get the job. So I didn't get either the fellowship or the junior writer's job. [laughter] By that time I was smitten with the notion of becoming a screenwriter. I mean, I got the bug during the three months that I was waiting impatiently for the answer. I started working on an original story for the screen and managed through a mutual friend to get it to Dore Schary, who was not yet an executive, but was beginning to become a prominent writer in the movie industry. He liked the story and recommended it to an agent, as I mentioned earlier, Nat Goldstone. Though he began trying to push me for a job, he did not get me my first job, as it happened. His main effect on my career was to persuade me to change the name on the story from Shapiro to Jarrico. But Dore Schary did recommend me to a producer friend of his named Nat Perrin, who had been a writer, who was primarily a writer, but at that point producing films, B pictures at Columbia Pictures [Industries, Inc.]. Nat Perrin presumably (I don't remember exactly) read this story that I had written. At any rate, he gave me a job, and that was my first job. That was in the summer of 1937, meaning it was, as I calculated, fourteen months after I graduated from college. That was my first job, and that was the beginning of a fairly continuous employment as a screenwriter for a number of years.

LARRY CEPLAIR

I'd like to go back and ask you just a few things here. So your college career began in the fall of 1932?

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

At USC?

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

And you stayed there for two years?

PAUL JARRICO

No. I stayed there for one year. Actually, my grades weren't good enough to get into the state college. My high school grades weren't good enough. It was a sacrifice on my father's part. I mean, it wasn't easy for him to send me to a private school like USC or to pay the tuition, but he did. My grades were sufficiently good as a freshman so that I was able to transfer to UCLA for my second year. Then I went to Cal up at Berkeley for my third year, then back, as I described, to USC my fourth year.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What was the subject of your novel?

PAUL JARRICO

It was autobiographical like most first novels are.

LARRY CEPLAIR

A growing-up story sort of thing?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. It was sort of a day in the life of a young man. I think it was called **A Young Man Must Not Sleep**. It's kind of interesting, because it not only talks in a scarcely veiled way about my relations with my father and my mother, but also it talks about my giving a speech about the Depression and about unemployment. So it had the political content, which was natural, because, again, it was reflecting something that I was really concerned about and involved in.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you finish it?

PAUL JARRICO

The novel? No.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Do you still have the manuscript?

PAUL JARRICO

Oh, yes. I have most of the things I've written. I have quite good files of not only that and short stories and stuff, but certainly my professional files, all the stuff I've written in the fifty-one years that I've been a screenwriter. I have a representative draft or the final draft of almost everything I've written.

LARRY CEPLAIR

And you wrote a lot of short stories when you were in college?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah, a number. A dozen at least.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What sort were they? Were they realist, slice-of-life type stories?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. They were almost always based on experiences. Even when they were fictionalized, they were not fictionalized very much. I remember once in my-- One summer between my sophomore year and my junior year, I had gone back East. Actually, I'd gone back East between my freshman year and sophomore year as well, so this was my second trip back East. I was hitchhiking from New York to California. I had had a car or shared a car in getting to New York, but somehow, for reasons I could probably find somewhere, I found myself hitchhiking back to Los Angeles. It was difficult to catch rides, and somewhere about 60 percent across the country I found myself riding the freights the rest of the way, the final 40 percent. The freights were absolutely covered with unemployed people getting from here to there, there to here, and being rousted, chased off the train, and sneaking past the cops and catching the train again as it left whatever town had given us trouble. This was obviously rich experience for a kid, especially a socially

conscious kid. I wrote a story about that called “Superior Boy Goes Traveling.” I remember one piece of it in which I'm trying to talk to-- I mean, I described the look of the country. The style was realist, but it had some of the poetry of a voyage. Then I remember trying to talk politics to an unemployed man I was sitting next to, and he was saying to me, “You trying to make conversation, boy?” So it was not socialist realism, because in a socialist-realist story, you would have had a totally unrealistic picture of this unemployed guy who became fascinated by what I was saying and immediately instructed me in class consciousness or whatever. It was realistic enough to show that I was not exactly communicating. [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

Were you a moviegoer before this junior writing assignment came? Were you taken with movies?

PAUL JARRICO

Oh, yes. Oh, yes. I think it's hard to find people for whom movies were not a significant part of their culture as they grew up. I went to the Saturday matinees and watched the serials and rooted for the good guys in the white hats against the bad guys and against the Indians all during my childhood. Then more serious films. And I began to think about them, and they were a source of discussion and of-- They were an important cultural influence, always. You know, I liked some of the movies enormously. I really was impressed. I just didn't think of myself in connection with them, but certainly it was a field that interested me. Yes.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Had you seen any of the Russian films at that point? [Sergei] Eisenstein or [Vsevolod] Pudovkin or [Aleksandr] Dovzhenko?

PAUL JARRICO

I probably did. I think actually I began to see more of them when I began to work in films. But I had probably seen some.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Were you aware of D. W. Griffith and his films?

PAUL JARRICO

Not really. When I became a screenwriter, I began to study film for the first time, really, even though these easy courses that I had taken so that I could have time to write as a senior included a course in screenwriting, in which I got a D, and a course in cinematography, in which I barely got a C. I'd taken them really because they were the easiest courses I could find, and I paid very little attention to them. But I guess I was exposed to a little bit then. Then later, as an increasingly serious screenwriter, I began to really look at old films and read books about films and do the kind of studying that I had not done when I was in theory studying film.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What was your first screen story, the one that got you started?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, there was a minor irony involved, because it was an adaptation of a short story by a writer named Paul Gallico. The story had appeared in the **Saturday Evening Post**, as I recall, and was called "'Twas the Night Before Christmas." Therefore, my first screen credit read: "Screenplay by Paul Jarrico from a story by Paul Gallico," a confusion that I ran into a number of times. That is to say, Gallico, though he was on the opposite side of the fence politically, would occasionally get messages or mail or manuscripts or whatever addressed to me and vice versa. It was a story about some reporters whose boss sends them out to look for a goat on Christmas Eve, because the boss has promised a goat and a wagon to his child for Christmas and has forgotten about it and remembers about it at the last moment and assigns his two reporters. They and a newspaper photographer go hunt for a goat. It was a comedy of their adventures trying to find a goat: pet shops, zoos, trying to steal a navy mascot at the Brooklyn naval yard, finally arriving at the publisher's home in the morning at dawn, going up in the elevator to the penthouse where the publisher and his family live. And the director suggested, since they're kind of high on their adventures and on their success in finally getting a goat, he suggested that they sort of talk it up--express their pleasure and their relief in this brief scene in the elevator as they go up. The male was played by Richard Arlen. The girl, the woman, was played by Mary Astor. The photographer was played by Lionel Stander, who was probably the original

Hollywood red. And so his notion of-- His ad lib of expressing pleasure and joy and relief was to sing not the words but the tune of the “Internationale.” So he sang [hums opening measures of the “Internationale”], and that's all. Nobody made anything of it or apparently noticed it really, except that a few years later I was introduced to a man who was the vice president in charge of distribution for Columbia Pictures. He said, “You wrote **No Time to Marry**.” That was what the picture was called. “Didn't you?” he said. I said, “Yes.” He said, “Would you tell me what was wrong with that picture?” I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “It was banned in Brazil, banned in Argentina, banned in Bolivia, banned here, banned there.” He says, “I've run that picture a half dozen times trying to see what was wrong with it. I've never been able to see why they banned it.” [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you enlighten him?

PAUL JARRICO

I forget, but I thought it was awfully funny. That story has been told in various ways. Actually, about the illusions that reds in Hollywood had about sneaking content into films, or their efforts to sneak in content into films, which was not the case at all-- It was simply a prank on the part of Lionel Stander that was not at all important at the time.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So this was the one you had written that Nat Goldstone had changed your name on and--

PAUL JARRICO

No. No. No. This was my first professional job. This was the first time I was at work for a studio on salary, $100 a week, I'll have you know, as opposed to the $35 a week I didn't get. No, the story I wrote that in a sense got me my break, or at least interested some people in me as a potential screenwriter, was a story called “And Both Were Young,” about a young man and his sweetheart who try to escape from the problems of Depression America by contriving to get to a South Sea island, which was an escape from the problems of the world. But they found themselves, once they were there, recreating the

civilization that they had run away from. It wasn't a bad story as a first screen effort, as a first effort to write a screen story. I can see why it would catch the eye of certain people. But it was never made.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So was there a light comedy element in your writing in those days? Is that something that you were--?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. That first one is accurately described as a romantic comedy and was intended to be a romantic comedy. This irony of recreating what they were running away from was treated as a comic irony, not as a solemn observation about society. My first screenplay credit, No Time to Marry, was comedy. The only social content actually, aside from the singing of the “Internationale,” was that since it took place on Christmas Eve, I had as a throwaway scene a bunch of Santa Clauses picketing. [laughter] That was the red propaganda I managed to sneak into that one.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What were your aspirations as a screenwriter? When you got the job, what did you think you would do as a screenwriter? What sorts of thing did you think you would write? Or did you not have any sense of that at that point?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I think basically I was just excited about the notion that I was going to be making a living in an interesting field and that this was a break, a real break, because all kinds of people wanted to get into the movies. Here I was, more or less fresh out of college and getting a break. So I wasn't thinking in either big social terms or big aesthetic terms. Or I wasn't thinking very much in those terms. Certainly, because I was a very political person, not only by virtue of my background but by virtue of having been very active in student politics, it was natural for me to think of content. But not as a program of action. Not “Gee, now this is my chance to really try to do something that will advance my causes, my social beliefs.” I wouldn't have to plan such a thing. It would be a natural expression. And though I was increasingly interested in the potentialities of the medium, of the fantastic potentialities artistically of the

medium, that was not foremost for me either, at that time. That also was something that came natural to me as someone who was, if not an intellectual, at least a student. I mean, someone who was reading and thinking.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you think that you would write novels and stories as well, or were you just going to be a screenwriter?

PAUL JARRICO

I hadn't thought it out, but I'm sure that if you had asked me at the time, I would have insisted that I still wanted to be a-- I guess I might have said a "real writer."

LARRY CEPLAIR

You said you began to study film. Who impressed you in those days as makers of films?

PAUL JARRICO

Fritz Lang was a man whose films I was very impressed with, especially a picture called **Fury**. That was probably before I got my first job. I think that got out in '36, if I'm not mistaken.

LARRY CEPLAIR

That was the labor strike film.

PAUL JARRICO

It was a mob action film, a lynching.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Right.

PAUL JARRICO

Then I was very taken, not as a serious student of films but as an audience, with the romantic comedies that were really the high point of the thirties. **It Happened One Night**, **My Man Godfrey**, **Easy Living** I think one was called, **The Devil and Miss Jones**. There was one that I just loved, and I

recently ran it for a film class I was teaching, called **Man's Castle**. It was written by Jo Swerling, directed by Frank Borzage, starred Spencer Tracy and Loretta Young, and it was about a young couple in a Hooverville. A Depression film, but a beautiful film! These films were the ones that not only impressed me the most but also influenced me the most. That is to say, my natural bent as a writer was romantic comedy at the time, partly because those were the films I admired most. Those were the films I enjoyed most. The idea that I could maybe write something like that was pleasing to me, exciting to me.

LARRY CEPLAIR

When you came to Columbia, did they hand you the Gallico story and say, “Here, write a screenplay”?

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did they give you a collaborator, too?

PAUL JARRICO

No.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Wasn't that unusual for a young writer? Weren't most young writers usually paired with an older writer?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, my producer was an older writer, but it was a B picture. They weren't taking it all that seriously. It was a period when the studios were turning out five hundred pictures a year, and a number of them were so-called program pictures. This was simply a program picture. I got some help, obviously, from my producer. I remember the first thing I did when I got an office was to call the story department and say, “Send me a script.” They said, “Which one?” I said, “Any one,” because I really wanted to see the form. And they sent several scripts, assorted scripts, and I began to see how they were broken up into scenes and typographically: fade-in, interior, and such and such a place, day or night. These were superficial lessons, but I also remember that the first

draft I wrote had every angle that I could imagine. I mean, if two people were talking, I had his point of view, her point of view, over his shoulder, over her shoulder, camera does this, camera does that. The first lesson I had, one might say, was the producer, who was a very sweet and friendly guy and is still a friend of mine, Nat Perrin, taking a blue pencil and saying, “You don't need this. You don't need this. You don't need this. The director's going to have to make up his own mind about the angles. Furthermore, he won't pay any attention to your instructions about camera angles anyway, unless you have a story point to make. If the husband and the wife are talking and the husband turns away and the wife slips some poison into his glass, and you want to say, ‘Close-up: her hand slipping poison into the glass,’ that makes a point. That's a story point. Then that's when you want to describe what the camera does. But ordinarily, if two people are talking in a master scene--” Well, this is a simple enough lesson, but that was about all the guidance I had as far as screenwriting went. It was good guidance. No, I shouldn't say that. The man, Perrin, made some criticisms, and I made some changes based on his criticisms, so I guess that was also part of the learning process. But essentially I learned by doing, as I guess that's the best way for anybody to learn. I was very lucky, because within a few years I'd had the opportunity to work on a number of films, and I certainly think I got better and better as I got more and more experience.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you like the movie?

PAUL JARRICO

The first one?

LARRY CEPLAIR

Yeah.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I was pleased to see that things I'd written on paper were up there on the screen, but I didn't have any illusions about it being a really good movie. If I had had such illusions, the reviews would have dashed them in any event, because they were not very positive. They were indulgent, at best.

LARRY CEPLAIR

But Columbia kept you.

PAUL JARRICO

Oh, Columbia liked what I had done. I guess they liked the fact that I was turning out a screenplay at $100 a week within a relatively few weeks. They put me on other things and they gave me a contract and raised me to $150 and so on. In fact, my salary, even though I didn't stay at Columbia but kept jumping around from studio to studio, went up very, very steadily during those early years. I mean, I was on the escalator. The escalator carries those who are already on it up sort of automatically. It did at that time.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Until you went into the armed forces, you worked steadily at the studios?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. There were periods of unemployment, but they never lasted very long. Yes, I would say that between 1937 and 1943-- What would that be?

LARRY CEPLAIR

Six or seven years.

PAUL JARRICO

I worked steadily. Then I was in the merchant marine, but not very long. Then I was back at MGM. In fact, I was under contract at MGM when I shipped out in the merchant marine. Then I was drafted into the navy at the tail end of the war. Between the period of time that I was in the merchant marine and the time that I was in the navy, though I was under contract to MGM, I was borrowed by RKO [Radio Pictures, Inc.] and I worked on a script at RKO which they liked. Therefore, when I was in the navy, I contrived to get out of my MGM contract and to work out a much better contract at RKO.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What I'd like to do, if you don't mind, is go back over your screenplays that you wrote and talk a little about them, if that's all right with you.

PAUL JARRICO

It's all right insofar as I can remember the details without looking things up.

LARRY CEPLAIR

The next one that I have been able to figure out was **The Little Adventures**, on which you got a screen story credit from Columbia. Does that ring a bell?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. I guess the second thing I did after I finished **No Time to Marry**-- I worked on something called **I Am the Law**, which was a crime story. It was written by Jo Swerling, whom I admired a lot, but I made some contribution on an interim basis--not enough to merit a credit, but I remember working on that. Then I guess the next thing I was assigned to was **The Little Adventuress**, which starred a child star of the period named Edith Fellows. I contrived some sort of story but, as the credit would indicate, didn't write the screenplay.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Then there was Beauty for the Asking, for which you did write the screenplay.

PAUL JARRICO

No, I think my next credit was on another Columbia picture called **The Face behind the Mask**, starring Peter Lorre. I shared a screenplay credit on that. Then I got a job at RKO, where I shared a screenplay credit on **Beauty for the Asking**, starring Lucille Ball. It was about a woman who is having difficulties in love and invents or develops a line of beauty products. A minor element in the plot was some sort of expose about cosmetics that sell for a high price because of the packaging and the advertising, but really the ingredients cost very little. It wasn't much of a social point. [laughter] But I remember feeling kind of pleased about having got that in. But I think we may have the wrong order, because I seem to remember that I was at Universal [Pictures] doing something about some dead-end kids who get a job in the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps].

LARRY CEPLAIR

Men of the Timberland?

PAUL JARRICO

Men of the Timberland.

LARRY CEPLAIR

I have that coming out in 1941.

PAUL JARRICO

Oh, it may have come out later, but I think I worked on that before I worked on **Beauty for the Asking**. I'm not sure. These are the kind of things that I could check quite easily. At any rate, in those early years, there were other jobs, and they included one called **Men of the Timberland**. The CCC, as you recall, was part of the New Deal effort to put people back to work or to get kids off the street or to help impoverished kids with some healthy work in the forests. There, too, I do remember trying to get a social dimension to the script by talking about the absolute ruthlessness of the timber barons, who simply cut timber whether it was the wise thing to do from a conservation or environmental point of view or not. This is, come to think of it, fairly early in the game to be dealing with environmental and conservationist ideas, but I suppose this goes back to an earlier question. I suppose I always felt that those things were not simply things to be brought in but represented the solution to story problems. I mean, they provided for conflict. They provided for drama. It was good writing to be able to get some ideas into a script. In the same period, I got a job at I guess the studio that had the least prestige of any, called Monogram [Productions, Inc.], developing a screenplay about Rip Van Winkle. That was in 1939. I did a script which-- I find this difficult to believe, and you may find this difficult to believe, but I'm trying to get it produced this year, [laughter] It's a short forty-nine years later. But if I tell you about it, you'll see why. Or have I ever told you about it?

LARRY CEPLAIR

You've mentioned it, yeah.

PAUL JARRICO

Do you want me to tell you?

LARRY CEPLAIR

I think so.

PAUL JARRICO

Talk about it? Well--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Actually, we have to stop. I think we'll have to use that for next time.

1.3. TAPE NUMBER: II, SIDE ONE

JULY 29, 1988

LARRY CEPLAIR

Let's go back and review the projects that you worked on from the start of your screenwriter career so we can get a sense of the texture of the life of a screenwriter. As we were saying before we turned on the tape, the credits do not accurately reflect the work a screenwriter does. So do you want to just begin?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I had talked about writing an original that interested some people in the industry and that helped me get my first job. I talked about this first job, which also turned out to be my first credit, called **No Time to Marry**, with Mary Astor and Richard Arlen and Lionel Stander. I had mentioned then that Columbia Pictures [Industries, Inc.] had then assigned me to **I Am the Law** briefly. It was about that time, I think, that I was borrowed by Sam [Samuel] Goldwyn to work on something called **The Duchess of Broadway** that never got made. But it was a significant move, because it was while I was working for Goldwyn that I met Garson Kanin, who was also at that time working for Goldwyn. And that really led much later to my doing **Tom, Dick and Harry**, which he directed and which was the picture which came out in 1941--that is to say, several years after the period that we're discussing. But it was the picture that graduated me from B pictures to A pictures, so to speak. At any rate, after **The Duchess of Broadway** which was not made, I came back to Columbia, worked on a Blondie film which wasn't made. They then had a series on Blondie. These were B pictures. Worked on **The Little Adventuress**, which I had mentioned. Worked on **The Face behind the Mask**. Was either loaned to RKO [Radio Pictures, Inc.] for **Beauty for the Asking**, or possibly by that time I was finished with Columbia for a while and simply was employed by RKO. I think the latter. After **Beauty for the Asking**, I worked on something called **Probation Nurse**, I

think. It was never made. **Men of the Timberland** comes in there somewhere, for Universal [Pictures]. And at some point, as I also mentioned, I went to work at Monogram [Productions, Inc.] doing a screenplay based on the Washington Irving classic, “Rip Van Winkle.”

LARRY CEPLAIR

How did you ever get to Monogram? -Do you remember? I mean, that's--

PAUL JARRICO

I was at that point a free-lance writer working for any studio that would employ me. Monogram, though it was the bottom of the scale, was certainly at my wage level at that period, which was quite low, as reasonable a customer for my services as anyone. They hired me for nine weeks, as I recall, at $200 a week, which meant that they had a screenplay for $1,800, which was cheap even by Monogram's standards. [laughter] But I took the assignment very seriously, as I think I did in general. I had not grown cynical, if I ever did, about the possibilities of trying to make films that were good rather than bad or significant rather than insignificant or meaningful rather than lacking in meaning. So in the Rip Van Winkle screenplay I guess I had my first chance to deal with something that had always interested me, that I'd grown up being interested in, which was the American democratic tradition and the significance of the Bill of Rights, of America as a country of freedom and opportunity, especially freedom, as far as my family was concerned. At any rate, in the original story, Rip falls asleep before the American Revolution and wakes up twenty years later after the American Revolution. Washington Irving made very little of that, and I took that element and expanded it into a-- I just added another dimension, which was a political dimension. Before he falls asleep, they're throwing people into jail for speaking their minds. When he wakes up, they're still throwing people into jail for speaking their minds. He gets involved in the fight for the Bill of Rights, which in terms of chronology was absolutely right. It was 1789 when the Constitution had been-- I'm sorry, it was 1787. Now I'm mixed up.

LARRY CEPLAIR

It was written in 1787 and ratified and started into operation in 1789.

PAUL JARRICO

Right, but a number of states had agreed to ratify it only on the condition that a Bill of Rights be added, and that was the element that I tried to dramatize. At any rate, they liked the script, but they didn't make it, which is the fate of most scripts. In subsequent years, I took options on the property several times. At one time Orson Welles was interested in it, and others. Ultimately, I had paid Monogram more in option money than they had paid me to write it in the first place. Still later, considerably later, I reacquired all rights to the thing and continued off and on for literally decades to promote the film. Now, in 1988, I may have a production going again in cooperation with the University of California, Santa Barbara. If it gets made next year, which will be the fiftieth anniversary of my having written it, I think it will be a world record of fidelity to a project.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Is that usual for a writer to have liked a project enough to not let go of it, to just keep on trying, in one way or another? Or do most of them just sort of file them away and go on?

PAUL JARRICO

I would say it's not unusual. I would say that writers do tend to remember certain scripts that they've written and do feel very frustrated about their not having been produced, realized, and bringing them up again and again, usually fruitlessly. I think feeling especially close to certain things you've done is not too unusual.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So you finished “Rip Van Winkle.” It wasn't made, and you left Monogram?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. Well, that was, as I indicated, a relatively brief assignment.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was working in a studio like Monogram or Republic [Pictures Corporation] significantly different than working in one of the major studios?

PAUL JARRICO

No. You sat in an office with a blank piece of paper. It was the same process.

LARRY CEPLAIR

You were treated the same. I mean, just because they were on the lower end didn't mean that you were--They weren't sweatshops, in other words.

PAUL JARRICO

No. No. Though B pictures in general had a certain speed-up assembly line aspect. I recall working at RKO, I guess during this period. I forget whether I was working on **Beauty for the Asking** or something else. I was given to understand that I was expected to turn out at least five pages a day and on a six-day week, which we observed at that point. That meant about thirty pages a week, and that meant that in about four weeks there ought to be at least the first draft of a screenplay, and sometimes the first draft was the final draft. I had an office once at RKO next to that of Dalton Trumbo, with whom I had become friendly. This was in the early days of my career, and I was working away assiduously, trying to do my quota of pages so that I could finish my screenplay in the allotted time, or more or less my allotted time. Trumbo was playing cards and bullshitting and lying down and reading, and in general not applying himself, and I was getting very worried on his behalf. But he had apparently been thinking all that time, because the last few days of the four weeks, he sat down and began working really hard and really fast and turned out just as much in those few days as I had turned out in a month. It was a picture, if I'm not mistaken, called **Five Came Back**, which was quite a good film and which he wrote very, very quickly indeed.

LARRY CEPLAIR

One thing I was going to ask you which struck me as I was listening to the tape of our last interview was that you seemed-- There doesn't seem to be in your discussion of screenwriting any of the sort of frustration or bitterness or cynicism that a lot of the screenwriters have had. It seemed like you had a fairly positive attitude toward it. You expected certain projects wouldn't go. You expected you would have to work on certain projects that were not all that terrific. But you liked screenwriting, and that was something that you enjoyed doing in and of itself.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, it's hard work. I liked the feeling that I was getting better at it. But it's true. I took the craft seriously. I was trying to master it as a craft. I recognized that I needed more experience and that I was getting better--or at least in my own mind--with each assignment. Yes, I guess I had a positive attitude toward screenwriting, but I also had the sense of onerous labor. I mean, it's hard work. You don't just-- Maybe the example of Trumbo is misleading, because generally you sweat to get a script out.

LARRY CEPLAIR

But I mean you-- Other screenwriters I've talked to were saying that even at the beginning of their careers when they realized the kinds of projects they would have to work on, it was sort of dispiriting to them. You apparently didn't find it that way. Each script was some way a challenge?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, each script was a challenge, but also a sense of humor helped a lot, because one did encounter a lot of stupidity on the part of the people one was working for. I remember one assignment. I had a-- I forget the man's name, but he had been head of Republic and his claim to fame was that he had invented the singing cowboy. He bought himself-- [Nat] Levine his name was, and he bought himself, almost literally, a job producing at MGM [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.], which of course was a lot more prestigious. He was rumored to have paid $1 million, or to have invested $1 million, if you will, in order to become a producer at MGM. They promised him-- They had a radio show, a very big radio show at the time, called, I think, “MGM on Parade,” which used the talents of all of their enormous stars. They had more stars than any studio in town. He was promised that he could do a film which would be based on this radio series and he would have all these available stars. Then they cut him down until he was left with only one star, or semi-star, who played a comic senator, which was his role on this series. Frank Morgan, I think, was the star. So I was hired with an old-timer--I was still very young--named Jimmy [James] Gruen as a team that they made up. I mean, I didn't know Jimmy Gruen; Jimmy Gruen didn't know me. But we were hired together to work on a picture called **Frank Morgan for Senator** for this man Levine. I hope I've got his name right. I could check it later. We were shown our office. We sat in our office and we looked at each other and we began to talk about

what we could do with this. And Levine had said-- First thing he had said, "**Frank Morgan for Senator**, but no politics." So we made up a story about a radio comic who dreams of being a man of eminence. In other words, we were using the Frank Morgan persona as a radio comedian. We went to Mr. Levine's office to tell him our idea, and I said, "We have this man who is very frustrated about being a radio comedian." He says, "What does that mean, frustrated?" I said, "Well, you know, a man sits behind a desk day after day and he dreams of other things: of having a boat and sailing the seven seas." He said, "I like that. Put a boat in it." [laughter] So we did put a boat in it, but nothing came of the picture. But I mean, if you couldn't laugh at your experiences, you really did become bitter at the ignorance, though occasionally one also met producers who made sense. I did work for some literate producers. But over the first five years or so of my career, I must have worked for--I don't know--twenty producers or more, and perhaps five of them were really bright. Usually they were writers who had become producers.

LARRY CEPLAIR

But that's just the lot of a young writer. Right? You sort of bounce around.

PAUL JARRICO

Sure. Sure. Sure. I should repeat that I considered myself lucky. I mean, I had been married, as I mentioned, while I was a senior at college. We had our first child [William Aaron Jarrico] five years after we were married, which means that I was still very much at the beginning of my career. So I was a young man and considered myself quite fortunate. I certainly had not become, though I don't think I ever did, embittered about the fate of the screenwriter. Though it was frustrating to be a screenwriter in the sense that you had no control, really, over the fate of what you had created, and very often one dreamed of having a boat and sailing the seven seas.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Or writing a great novel.

PAUL JARRICO

Right. Or even a great movie that would actually be made the way you wrote it.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So what happened? “Rip Van Winkle” wasn't made for reasons which are not clear.

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

And you left Monogram.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, well, as I say, that stint at Monogram was a brief one. I went to Universal, where I worked on **Men of the Timberland**, which I think I mentioned. I went back to Columbia, where I worked on **The Face Behind the Mask**, a B picture with Peter Lorre, which I've also mentioned. I sold a couple of originals. One original, which I wrote with Richard Collins, was about women's liberation, one could say. We sold it in 1940 to MGM. It was never made, but it was called “That Was No Lady.” It was about a woman who was editor in chief of a whole group of magazines and a man who was the editor of one of the magazines under her aegis or control dealing with hunting and fishing--a **Field and Stream** sort of magazine. He was very macho and resented having a woman boss. This was considerably before the time when women's liberation became a very big issue, but that was I think characteristic of the radical movement in Hollywood, that we were more aware of some of these issues before they became mainstream issues. I guess that also, to jump ahead, people say that **Salt of the Earth** was a pioneer film about women's liberation, because they didn't become conscious of the women's liberation movement until many years later. But certainly there was a consciousness of the discrimination against women on the part of progressive people, men and women, long, long before it became a mainstream issue.

LARRY CEPLAIR

When you did an original, did you write the script and then submit it, or did you pitch the idea and then write the script on an assignment? The [Screen Writers] Guild was fighting speculative writing in those days, wasn't it?

PAUL JARRICO

No, I don't think the guild was fighting against speculative writing. If you weren't unemployed, you were self-employed. If you were self-employed, you were writing for the market, usually not screenplays at that time, usually treatments or original stories. This was an original story and sold in the form of an original story.

LARRY CEPLAIR

How long would an original story be?

PAUL JARRICO

This one was about forty or fifty pages.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So that represents quite a bit of work then.

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah, yeah. But I remember whenever I was unemployed-- I was self-employed, but you're part of the--You're creating the pool from which the studios fished for their projects. I mean, it was just part of the industry. They got their material either from plays, novels, or original stories created by unemployed writers, essentially.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So you'd write the story, give it to your agent, and your agent would circulate it?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. He would send it out to various studios, or if you had some contacts of your own, you would take the story to your own contacts. I think this sold in a fairly normal way. That is to say, I think the agent circulated it and story departments of various studios covered it. I mean, you have to remember that eight studios controlled the industry and made the bulk of the five hundred pictures per year being made. So it was a considerable market, and there were far fewer screenwriters than there are now.

LARRY CEPLAIR

As a young screenwriter, were you already known? How did that work? Your name just began to appear on the lists of young screenwriters with some talent that studios would be interested in using?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. Again, because the pool of talent was much smaller, it was easier to become known. And the trade papers would say, you know, “Jarrico has been hired by Monogram to work on Rip Van Winkle.” There was an item on the front page of the **Hollywood Reporte**r. It was a little item, but nevertheless your name becomes known, or producers talk to each other, saying, “Got a comer here. Got a young fellow here who did a good job for us.” Yeah. And I was, to use a phrase I think I also used last time, “on the escalator.” If you do something that is adequate or even better than adequate, then it's easier to get to your next job because you're considered one of the working writers. I was one of the working writers.

LARRY CEPLAIR

That's an interesting term, “working writer.” In those days, was credit--? To have a list of credits, was that as important, or was having a list of projects on which you would work for various studios more important?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, credit was always the major payoff. I mean, it was-- It's easier now, in fact, when the proportion of the things developed to things made is much larger, when there are many more things prepared than are made. It's easier now to get a reputation for having written pictures that never got made. In that period, I would say, though everyone expected to write pictures that were not made, more of the pictures that you worked on got made. I think I was batting about 50 percent in my early years. Then later it was down to about 33 percent. The percentage got made got smaller and smaller, though, of course, the blacklist played a very big role in that.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Fifty percent then, that's a very good percentage?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah, I would think.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Because I know if you look again at those lists of credits for what are thought to be very successful writers, they seem rather small until you then think about everything else they must have been doing that for one reason or another didn't pan out. So you sold a couple of original ideas after leaving Monogram?

PAUL JARRICO

Right, and then-- Well, as I said, I did a number of B pictures in that period, and sold this original that I wrote with Richard Collins. One of my jobs was at Republic on a thing called**All-Night Program**, which was about an all-night radio show and the audience out in the night that listened to it. I worked on that with a young writer named Lester Koenig. Then I began working on **Tom, Dick and Harry**. I say "began" because there were several stages. It was 1939, still early in my career, that I first began to work on it. As I say, it was a result of having met Garson Kanin in 1937 at Goldwyn. I had a notion, and he liked it. He was, by that time, under contract as a director to RKO and just beginning to do some interesting work. His first film there had been **A Man to Remember**, that Trumbo had written. He was beginning to rise there, and so when he recommended this idea, they put me to work. I developed it on salary. That was not a spec job. I developed it off and on for a couple of years. That is to say, it went through various stages, treatments--first draft screenplay, second draft screenplay. By the time it was made-- It was shot in 1940 and released in 1941. I remember that I had been on it off and on maybe eighteen months--not steadily. I think there was a gap of eighteen months between the time I started and the time it finally went into production.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Is that unusually long?

PAUL JARRICO

I'm not sure. It seemed long to me, because we had a joke-- Our son was born in 1940. We had a joke, Sylvia [Gussin Jarrico] and I: "What does your father do? He works on **Tom, Dick and Harry**." [laughter] Anyway, that picture, which starred Ginger Rogers and on which I had a sole story and screenplay credit, got me an Academy [Award] nomination for the writing, and it really, to use

a phrase I've already used, graduated me from B pictures to A pictures. Then, after that, I was in much more demand and I was able to command a much higher salary.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did Kanin work with you on rewriting the script? And were you there when he was shooting it?

PAUL JARRICO

Kanin made minimal proposals for changes in the script, though he did react to what I was doing, as did the producer, Bob [Robert] Sisk. But Kanin was absolutely unusual, unique maybe, in his insistence that I work with him all during the shooting of the film and even that I participate in the editing of the film. He honestly believed that the writer is the creator, that the director realizes what the writer has created. He himself used the metaphor or parallel of the composer and the conductor as the difference between the writer and the director, or the architect and the builder. These were his phrases. He believed in the writer's role sufficiently that he stopped being a director and became a writer and wrote **Born Yesterday**, which made his reputation as a writer, and has been essentially a writer in all the decades since. So for a writer to work with a director who believed that the writer was the creator was really unusual then and now and was, of course, extremely useful to me, because it gave me an opportunity to learn much more about production than most writers are ever given a chance to learn.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Have you changed--? I think we talked several years ago that when you were writing **Tom, Dick and Harry**, you thought it was more socially significant as you were writing it than looking back on it you now find it to be.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I do use it as an example of illusion about thematic content. But I don't want to denigrate the film. When I was working on it, and in fact when it was being made, the basic notion was that I was going to attack the Cinderella myth and I was going to attack the success myth. My wife Sylvia was taking a master's degree, or had already taken a master's degree, in social psychology.

She had been working on the question of the content of film. It was really out of the discussions with her about the fact that most films propagated the success story and the Cinderella myth, or a great many films did, that I had the smart-ass notion that I would attack these notions, these concepts, these myths. So I had a telephone operator who dreamed of marrying a millionaire who met a garage mechanic who pooh-poohed the whole notion that she could possibly even meet a millionaire. She's engaged to a middle-class car salesman. And, of course, she does meet a millionaire. She gets herself engaged to all three of them simultaneously and has fantasies about what it would be like to be married to each of them and ultimately, in a nightmare fantasy, to all three of them simultaneously. Though I was writing a romantic comedy and wanted it to be funny and wanted it to be romantic, I really thought that these themes would come through very strongly. That was my gift to the enlightenment of the film audience. Indeed, there's dialogue in the film that I guess the [House] Un-American Activities Committee, if the dialogue had been pointed out to them, would have found very subversive. At one point the garage mechanic says, “I don't believe in every man for himself. I get lonesome.” I mean, this was almost as radical as Dalton Trumbo's famous line, “Share and share alike. That's democracy,” which Ginger Roger's mother pointed to as an example of communist propaganda in films. At any rate, when I say I kidded myself, it's because, essentially, the girl marries the poor fellow not because his ideology is more persuasive, but because when they kiss they ring bells. So I found the picture propagating the very basic romantic notions of love conquering all that I had set out, if not to subvert, at least to provide a substitute for. And in that sense, I kidded myself and realized later that I had kidded myself. But I don't blame myself for having tried. [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

I understand that. No, it was just a good example of how looking back on something, you see it a little bit differently than when you were doing it. I suppose, theoretically, the best thing you could have done would have been to have her not marry any of them and just continue with her career. Would Hollywood have made a film like that?

PAUL JARRICO

I don't think so. In fact, Sam Goldwyn said to me, “You cost RKO a million dollars by having her marry the poor fellow instead of the rich fellow.” And I said, “They wouldn't have made as much money as they did make on the film if I had done that.” But that was not a serious discussion. It was--

LARRY CEPLAIR

So what happened? Now the film comes out. You are now a writer.

PAUL JARRICO

Now I'm better known, and at that point I had an idea for a movie, and Richard Collins and I developed it. You asked earlier did one pitch ideas or did one write them and peddle the written document. In this case, our agent made an appointment for us to talk to a producer named Bruce Manning at Universal. He had been the writer for Joe [Joseph] Pasternak on a couple of successful films--one called **A Hundred Men and a Girl**--and had become a producer. We told him the story with the agent sitting there with us. He said, “Wait right here.” He went to the front office. He came back about fifteen, twenty minutes later and said, “Will you take $40,000 to write this story and screenplay for us?” We said yes, or we said, “Let's think about it for ten minutes,” or whatever. At any rate, the deal was made strictly on the basis of reputation and the guy liking an idea. Reputation playing the role of being some guarantee to him that there would be a good screenplay. He's buying something blind, except that he likes an idea. So there you have a good example of how success of the A film makes other deals much more possible.

LARRY CEPLAIR

How did you and Richard Collins begin to work together?

PAUL JARRICO

We were friends. He was one of perhaps ten young writers whom I had met early in the game who became good friends of mine. There was also a political connection. But I didn't have a social connection with everybody with whom I had a political connection. So there was sort of a social group that wasn't exclusively political but that tended to have a political core.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you prefer collaborating to writing alone, or did it matter to you?

PAUL JARRICO

It didn't much matter. It was a lot easier to work in collaboration.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was the salary the same? Or were you--? In other words, if you worked on something by yourself, did you get paid the same salary as if you worked on something with a collaborator?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, the members of a team would split the salary of a team, I guess. Though I suppose if two people had an uneven relationship and they had agreed beforehand and between themselves that one was to get more, they might have done that.

LARRY CEPLAIR

I guess what I'm saying is your part of the team salary would have been the same if you had been writing a script by yourself. Is that true or not true? Or did that differ? In other words, if you were a $l,000-a-week screenwriter, you had $1,000 a week no matter what you did or with whom you worked?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, I would say that. But generally, writers were either independent, individual, or part of a team. The teams would break up and the writer might try to get the same amount for himself as the team had gotten. I don't know. I really don't know the answer to that. I know that $40,000 for the two of us to do a script that we thought we could do relatively quickly was considered good money in those days and better than what I had been getting when I did **Tom, Dick and Harry**, because I was still-- I forget what I was getting, but it was something like perhaps $350 a week by the time I was developing Tom, Dick and Harry. But after that, my salary jumped to $750 to $1,000 to $1,250 and on up to $2,500 a week before I was blacklisted.

LARRY CEPLAIR

It must have seemed like an incredible amount of money.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, it did, but one gets used to it. [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

How did you then wind up at MGM? You did the story for Universal.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. Well then, he recommended us. They liked that script, though ultimately the fate of that script is funny, because we wrote it with Jimmy [James] Stewart and Jean Arthur in mind. It was called **Boy Wonder**. It was not made at the time we wrote it for various reasons, probably mostly casting reasons or getting the right director, or whatever. Ultimately, since they had an investment in it, since Universal had an investment in it, they made it as a [Bud] Abbott and [Lou] Costello film called **Little Giant**. So the difference between a Jean Arthur-Jimmy Stewart film and an Abbott and Costello film dictated some pretty basic differences in the ultimate script, which we had little to do with. Though Collins and I did share an original story credit on that film.

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LARRY CEPLAIR

So when you finished that project--

PAUL JARRICO

Well, then Bruce Manning, for whom we had developed **Boy Wonder** on this deal that I just described, recommended us to Joe Pasternak, the man that he had made his reputation working for, who had by this time become a producer at MGM doing musicals. Collins and I had a date to meet with Pasternak when our agent phoned one morning and said, “Would you go see Sam Goldwyn immediately? He wants to see you this morning about a project.” We went over, and he told us the story that he wanted us to work on, which ultimately became Bob Hope in **Treasure Chest**, if I'm not mistaken. At any rate, he told it with a good deal of animation, and we laughed at the right places because it was funny. When he finished and we laughed, he said, “Then you'll do it?” And I said, “Mr. Goldwyn, we're in kind of an embarrassing

situation. We made a date with Joe Pasternak at MGM for this afternoon, and we made that date before we were asked to come to see you. So we really can't give you our answer at this point." Goldwyn said--This is a true Goldwynism, I swear. He said, "Do the decent thing. Take this job and don't even tell him." [laughter] But we didn't. The way we worked it out, somehow we took both jobs. That is to say, we postponed the job that Pasternak was offering us, and we did take the Goldwyn job. Nothing came of it, or nothing came of our efforts on it. Then we went to work for Joe Pasternak at MGM on something called **Thousands Cheer**. It was a very banal story, which was the story that Pasternak presented to us and wanted us to do, about a soldier drafted into the army who falls in love with the colonel's daughter. I mean, a private and a colonel's daughter was old even then, but we did a script that was well received and was made almost immediately as a very, very big MGM film in which they threw in an enormous number of their biggest stars. The story we developed was war propaganda. By this time, the war had started, and it was designed to be-- I mean, we wanted it to be war propaganda. It was very simply an individualistic soldier who has trouble adjusting to the army and learns to. The colonel and the colonel's daughter were certainly important elements, but at the end of the movie-- He comes from a circus background. His family were high-wire acrobats, as he was. At the end, he has helped arrange for a camp show in which a lot of entertainers came to entertain the troops, including his family. And that was the excuse for having all of the MGM stars doing their numbers. Lena Home did a number. I think that was her first important role. The picture was a very successful musical and, again, advanced my career and Richard's as far as money goes, prestige goes, and got us our next assignment for the same producer, which was on **Song of Russia**. By this time, the Nazis had not only invaded Russia, but by this time we're at the end of '42 and the Battle of Stalingrad is being fought. In that picture, I would say that my politics and my writing career really crossed each other or met in a very appropriate way, because I was being paid a lot of money to work on a film about the necessity for American-Soviet friendship during a period in which both America and the Soviet Union were fighting Nazism. I found that Collins, though I didn't ascribe this to political reasons at the time, was dragging his feet. I felt the faster we could get that picture out, the better. I felt it was a matter of real urgency, that I was making some real contribution to the war effort by working on that film. So I pushed ahead very hard and

very fast. Collins, when we were finished, said, “You've done 90 percent of the script. I don't really deserve credit.” I said, “We're a team, and of course you're going to have credit.” And we did share credit. Looking back at it later when Collins was a cooperative witness before the Un-American Activities Committee and not only named me as a communist, which I was, but said in effect that I was a foreign agent, which I wasn't-- I did think, looking back at it, that what I thought of at the time as his laziness on Song of Russia had some political significance. Somebody said to me later that his going out of his way to nail me before the committee was a declaration of independence, because it was our experience working together--or not working together, or trying to work together--on Song of Russia that led me to break the collaboration and to say in effect, “From now on, you work on your own and I work on my own.” So somebody said his naming me was a declaration of independence. I said, “Yes, he wanted to stand on his own two knees.” The question of my relationship with Collins is, I suppose, a complicated question, because we were friends as well as being political comrades. It was a painful sort of denouement, his betrayal.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did the studio change much of the script you turned in?

PAUL JARRICO

No.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Let me ask you also a kind of a-- Were you aware of certain limits beyond which you could not go?

PAUL JARRICO

Definitely.

LARRY CEPLAIR

As you were writing.

PAUL JARRICO

Definitely. We were also aware that the government was pressuring the studio to make the film, and we were using that for all it was worth. There are funny

stories about the political fights that went on, but they were on such a low level that they were more comic than significant. [Louis B.] Mayer was trying to get Ingrid Bergman for the lead. Ingrid Bergman was under contract to David [O.] Selznick, who was Mayer's son-in-law, and so Mayer sent the script to Selznick trying to borrow Bergman. Selznick phoned him and said, “Dad, have you read the script?” Mayer apparently said yes, though it was fairly clear that he hadn't. Selznick said, “It's straight communist propaganda.” So Mayer called in his right-hand man, who was [Lawrence] Weingarten, I think, and said, “It's straight communist propaganda.” Weingarten called in Joe [Joseph] Mankiewicz-- I forget exactly the order of the hierarchy. But, anyway, it went down the line to Pasternak, our immediate producer, who was told it was straight communist propaganda. So Pasternak called Collins and me, white faced, and said, “It's straight communist propaganda.” We said, “What's communist about it?” So now the question “What's communist about it?” went step by step up the ladder to Mayer. We were called into an unprecedented conference with Mayer. I mean, lowly writers very seldom aspired to a conference with Mayer about a script. There were too many intervening layers. But, anyway, we sat around a table in a huge, white office. As I recall, the decor was white and it was large. We were in sort of an alcove, conference part of the office. Mayer started by complimenting us, and Pasternak beamed and nudged us. He was all excited. Then Mayer addressed himself to the question of what was communist about the script. He said, “The word ‘community.’ That should be taken out. It's too much like ‘communism.’” So we agreed to take out the word “community.” He said, “When Robert Taylor--” No, this was before, I think, the casting was completed. “When the American conductor goes on a tour of Russia, marries the Russian pianist who has appeared with his orchestra, they go to the farm where her parents work for the wedding, and the farm is described as a collective farm. I don't want it to be a collective farm. I want the girl's father and mother to own the farm.” So I said, “Mr. Mayer, they don't have individual farms in the Soviet Union. They only have collective farms.” He said, “I don't care. I will not have a collective farm in my movie.” So I proposed a compromise, which is that we won't say it's a collective farm and that we will write it in such a way that those who think that the mother and father own the farm will not be disabused of that and those who know that there's no such thing will not be shocked. [laughter] That was agreed to, and that was about it. But they did

more or less shoot what we wrote. Gregory Ratoff was the director. Robert Taylor was the star. Susan Peters played the Russian girl. The Un-American Activities Committee later used this as one of the prime examples of how communist propaganda had infiltrated Hollywood and subverted the screen. Mayer apologized to the committee for having made the film. He said that he had been pressured into it by the government. Taylor apologized for having starred in the film and said he had been pressured into it by the studio. A woman named Ayn Rand testified that the picture was transparently false because it showed Russians smiling, and she knew that Russians didn't smile, and so on. It became exhibit A of communist infiltration of Hollywood, along with a picture Lillian Hellman had written for Sam Goldwyn [**North Star**] and **Mission to Moscow** made by Warner Brothers [Pictures, Inc.]. Those were the three A pictures, major pictures, that Hollywood had made under the Roosevelt administration's pressure.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What did you think of the finished product?

PAUL JARRICO

I didn't like it. I didn't like **Thousands Cheer** either. I'd forgotten while I was working on it that it was fundamentally a story of a private and a colonel's daughter. Also, I'd forgotten while I was working on it that it was fundamentally a musical, an excuse to have a lot of musical numbers. But I was not ashamed of either of them. I just really didn't feel that either of them was a particularly good movie.

LARRY CEPLAIR

In **Thousands Cheer**, did you have pro-democratic or antifascist speeches for any of the people to say?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah, of a sort. There was even a song that some of the soldiers sing while they're mopping up a mess hall or something. It was a scene, if I'm not mistaken, in which Gene Kelly, who played the lead, did a dance number with a mop. At any rate, they sang this song, “Round, round Hitler's grave, round, round we go.” That had content of sorts. There were, yeah, a few references

to the fact that we were fighting some terrible enemy who had terrible beliefs. But not too much. Basically it was a recruiting picture.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What struck me about **Song of Russia** when I saw it, obviously many years after it was done, was that it was proof positive of how a casting decision can really sink a picture. I mean, you're so aware of how clodhoppingly bad Robert Taylor is in the role that it's almost-- It takes away from anything else.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. I took my mother [Jennie Shapiro] to a press preview of the picture, and I said as we left, “Did you like it, Mama?” She said, “Yes, but who's that boy?” [laughter] But casting also, I'm afraid, affected **Tom, Dick and Harry**, a film of which I was much more proud, because Ginger Rogers simpered. I don't see the picture very often, but whenever I do look at it or see part of it, I squirm because I dislike her. I wrote it with Jean Arthur in mind, and my visual image--I mean, my mental image--as I wrote it was Jean Arthur. Here is Ginger Rogers with an entirely different quality. So you're right. Casting is part of the content. It's not just part of the commercial sales program.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Albert Maltz once said that one of the reasons he wanted to write novels was because at least if it failed, it failed because of him, not because of the casting decision or this decision or that decision. That, you know, it would be completely within his control what went on.

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So did you go into the merchant marine after this?

PAUL JARRICO

Actually, directly from **Song of Russia**, because by that time any illusion I had that I could make a contribution to the war effort by writing films had been diluted if not dashed. Well, I'm not sure that was the correct formulation. I had started trying to get into the armed forces immediately after Pearl

Harbor, like a lot of other people. Because I had a wife and a child and so on, I was not draftable at the time. But I'd applied for a job as a combat correspondent with the army, the navy, the coast guard, the marines, and had been turned down by all of them--I later discovered because of my political record, which they knew, which everybody knew. I had tried to get into the OSS [Office of Strategic Services], and I had been turned down for that. Their policy was paradoxical and it swung like a pendulum. At a certain point, they wanted communists because they could work with partisans in various countries who were communists. At other points, they rigorously excluded communists. So my timing wasn't good at that time. When I applied, they turned me down. I had the qualifications. I was a college graduate. I was in good shape physically. But all of these required commissions. I mean, I had to become an officer to get the jobs that I was applying for. So the desire to get into the war more directly than as someone writing films, even propaganda films, was started very early. I was on the board of the [Screen] Writers Guild at the time, and I was at the head of a committee that was trying to define whether writers should be excused from the armed forces because they were making a contribution to the war effort as writers. It was a little difficult to define that, to define how important the writer's role was. We put out a questionnaire, and in fact we hired a sociologist to work with us in trying to get these definitions to make sense. I think we finally demonstrated that a writer, depending on the assignment, could be--should be--excused from the draft on the grounds that he was making a contribution. But it didn't satisfy me, even though I was the head of the committee. You might say it increased my desire to get in. In any event, having completed my work on **Song of Russia** and having been turned down by all these services, I got in touch with some friends of mine who were then officers of the NMU, the National Maritime Union--Leo Huberman, the educational director, and a guy named Blackie Meyers, who was also a red of sorts. Leo Huberman was, as it happens, a socialist rather than a communist, but well known as a radical. These were people I had known. So I phoned them and said, “I'd like to ship out.” They arranged it very quickly, very easily, so that I was able to ship out as an ordinary seaman on a Liberty ship without having to take any training. And I did, and that was fine. But I was a hitchhiker in the war. I was very conscious of the fact that I could quit at any time. Unlike most people in the war, whether I would stay or not was my own decision. I had one long and very

exciting and rewarding trip. It was a slow trip, because Liberty ships made their way across the ocean very slowly and in packs and zigzagging and so on. This was in the summer of 1943, or it started in the summer of 1943. We went first to-- We were carrying troops, five hundred troops. We were carrying munitions. We went first to Oran in Algeria, then to Naples, which had just fallen to the Allies, where we delivered a lot of munitions. We were under attack as we entered the Mediterranean by Nazi planes. We were under a more severe attack in Naples. That is to say, quite a few bombs were falling near us, because apparently the Nazis were trying to hit the docks where we were unloading. So I had some combat experience. The merchant mariners had been trained on board the ship to help the navy gun crews, so I was able to help man an antiaircraft gun. It was very exhilarating and it was very interesting, fascinating. I felt very good about what I was doing. But, as I said, I was free to quit. When we finally, after a number of months, got back to port in the United States, Norfolk, I did quit. I went back to my contract at MGM. They assigned me to a movie called**Action in the Living Room**, which I thought was a pretty good joke. I tried to turn that into a war propaganda film. I wrote a comedy about a woman whose husband was head of personnel, vice president in charge of personnel, for an aircraft company building planes for the war. He was on very close terms with the head of the union, because the unions at that time were devoted to increasing production. But this bourgeois wife whose husband never came home because he was always busy meeting with the head of the union learned that the head of the union was a very attractive woman. She got herself a job as a Rosie the riveter in her husband's plant and started complaining that the head of the union was too close to the boss. It was a comedy which also was about women's equality, women's liberation, which predictably enough was not made. That didn't last too long. They had wanted me to go back to work for Pasternak, but I refused to go back to work for Pasternak, having done two pictures for him.

LARRY CEPLAIR

You didn't dislike him. You just didn't like the movies he made.

PAUL JARRICO

I didn't like the movies he made, right, or the movies I made with him. Then, not terribly long after that, though there was a period there when I was back

home, and then-- Despite the fact that I had a wife and a child, because they were scraping the bottom of the barrel--I was then, I don't know, twenty-nine years old--I got drafted into the navy. But the war in Europe ended while I was in boot camp, and I wound up--I was an enlisted man--running the entertainment office at Treasure Island. Running it only because the officer who was in charge had arranged for me to assist him, and he got himself out of the navy very quickly after the Japanese surrendered. My job was to entertain the entertainers and to promote shows for the base, which included huge numbers of navy personnel coming back from the Pacific at that period. This was immediately before and after the end of the war in Japan. It was sort of a sailor's dream come true: a fancy-free life as a sailor in which I lived at the Palace Hotel and had my own car and had carte blanche orders to fly anywhere I wanted anytime to promote shows. I was able to bring in some good shows, because I knew some of the stars or had access to some of the stars and so on. So it wasn't much of a contribution, though there was one funny story involved in that period. I ran a contest to name the three theaters at the base. They were called Theater I, Theater II, and Theater III. I ran a contest to name them after navy heroes and managed to rig the contest so that one of them was named for Dorie Miller, who was a black man who had been killed heroically, and one for Basilone, a marine. The third one was a navy flyer named Butch O'Hare, for whom O'Hare Airport is named in Chicago. I got Orson Welles to agree to dedicate the three theaters on his weekly radio program, which had a large audience. I flew around the country interviewing the families of the men whom we were honoring, including the sharecropper family of Dorie Miller. He had been trained as a steward and had not been trained to man a gun, but he had manned a gun during the attack on Pearl Harbor and was subsequently killed on the sinking of the Liscome Bay. His father didn't want to say what I wanted him to say. I wanted him to say something positive about the war, and he wouldn't. What he said was, “If we had our druthers, we'd rather have our boy.” I said, “But when black boys and white boys fight and die together, don't you think it makes for a change?” He said, “Could be. I don't see no change yet,” and so on. So finally I said-- I was very impressed with him. His wife in a sunbonnet had been sitting there with us not saying a word. Finally, I said, “Okay, Mr. Welles will be in Treasure Island. He'll be asking you these questions. You'll be here. I want you to answer him just the way you've answered me, exactly the way you've

answered me.” He hesitated and he said, “I don't know. We've been living here a long time and we've never had no trouble.” “But,” I said, “you don't like the way you're living here.” And he said, “I don't know.” His wife, who hadn't said a word up to that point, said, “If you don't want to say those things, I'll say them.” And he said, “No, no, no. I'll say them. I'll say them.” So I flew to New York, stopping in Chicago and in Raritan, New Jersey, where Basilone's family lived, and met with Welles in New York and showed him the script I had written based on these interviews. He was very, very impressed with the Waco, Texas, sharecropper's part of the script, but he said, “What makes you think he'll answer this way?” I said, “Well, I've arranged with the station manager in Waco to telex the script to him, and he's going to rehearse the guy.” The guy was illiterate--couldn't read. Welles said, “You trust a southern station manager to coach this man to say these things?” I said, “No, I guess not.” So I flew back to Waco. I coached him. I held his hand. It really created a minor sensation at the time because-- The black newspapers picked it up as a guy who had defied ABC [American Broadcasting Corporation], I guess was the network, and the U.S. Navy and Orson Welles and had spoken his mind and so on. I felt very proud. Again, my subversive content. I had won a victory for subversive content. My immediate superior officer when I got back said, "You kind of stuck your neck out there, didn't you, lad?" But the commander, the commodore who was head of the base, said, "Good job, Jarrico." And that was that. So much for my service career.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Sharecroppers are interesting sources. Are you familiar with that book **All God's Dangers**? There's this sharecropper who is a member of the [Alabama] Sharecroppers Union. He didn't join it until he was in his sixties. But he did an oral history that made a book. It was an extraordinary recounting of life in the South, you know.

PAUL JARRICO

I maintained a relationship with these people for quite a while afterwards. For one thing, I wanted to make sure that they didn't get into trouble. They didn't.

LARRY CEPLAIR

That would have been a good subject for a script.

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So when you got out of the navy, you went back to Hollywood.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, during the period when I was in the navy, I guess I left out one step. I was in trouble at MGM, because I refused to work for Pasternak. I was turning down things. I had turned their assignment **Action in the Living Room** into something they didn't want, that they didn't ask for. I engineered a loan-out to RKO to work on a script that they wanted me for at RKO. I was in fact working on that script, close to completing the first draft of that script, when I was drafted. So while I was in the navy, which was only for thirteen months or so, basically at the tail end of the war and the immediate postwar period, I managed to get out of my contract at MGM and to get a new contract at RKO, and a much better contract, because it was a writer-director contract. Like many writers, I had the ambition to direct. They had liked this first draft of mine very much. It was kind of an ideal contract. It was six months out of the year. I could have six months to do my own work. I had a right to turn assignments down. As a director, I couldn't just be assigned to a script; it had to be something I approved. Though they had to approve if I proposed something. And it was for a good deal of money. And that's what I went into after the war. It was an ideal situation except that I kept turning down the things they wanted me to write and direct and they kept turning down the things I wanted to do. An unfortunate thing happened. The guy who had hired me, the man who had made this deal with me, Bill [William] Dozier, who was the head of production, lost his job there. A new head of production came in, who was Dore Schary. Now, DoreSchary was a very old friend of mine. He had gotten me, as I think I mentioned, my first job in films. But he had a different attitude towards the script that had gotten me this job. It was called **I Am Thinkin of My Darling**. It was a fantasy comedy, and Dore Schary did not like fantasy. So the script that had gotten me this terrific contract at RKO was shelved, and, as I say, I was having trouble getting the administration (meaning actually Schary) to agree to what I wanted to do. And I was being very independent and turning down things they wanted me to do. Finally

Schary and I agreed on a project. I had an idea for a picture about a studio ghost who lives on the studio lot secretly, to be played by Harpo Marx. I interested Harpo Marx in playing the role, and Schary approved it at a $750,000 budget, which was an in-between budget at that time, neither B nor A. I started writing the script, and Schary called me in apologetically and said that the board at RKO had decided not to make any more in-between pictures, that I could do it only if I could make it for $350,000. I said, “Dore, I don't know enough to make a B picture, to direct a B picture. I need a first-rate cameraman, first-rate editor. I need the time to make mistakes, to redo things if I haven't done them right. I won't do it for $350,000.” Which was a mistake on my part, because if I had done it, I would at least have had a crack at directing before I got blacklisted, because by this time we've almost reached-- Well, we're in '46, I think, or maybe the beginning of '47. I did write one script they liked. **The White Tower**, which I was not scheduled to direct. It was several years later, in 1950. My script was based on a novel by James Ramsay Oilman and was about mountain climbing, an effort to climb a mountain that was impossible to climb in the Swiss Alps. It was originally about the war. That is to say, an American pilot had been shot down. He had landed in neutral Switzerland, and he was dead tired. But in conflict with this mountain and with a Nazi who was on leave from the German side of the war, which was still raging, he regained the courage, the will to go back into the fight. That was the essence of the novel. By this time, we were postwar, and I changed it to a postwar story, with a different political message. My hero had come to Switzerland to avoid a third world war, a war he was sure was coming.

1.5. TAPE NUMBER: III, SIDE ONE

MARCH 13, 1990

LARRY CEPLAIR

Okay, Paul, it's been a while. We lost the tapes that continued your telling of the story of **The White Tower** and your postwar writing experience until you received your subpoena. So why don't you start with the story of your involvement with **The White Tower** and what it was about and then just go from there.

PAUL JARRICO

I came out of my service in the navy, as I probably have already recounted, in '46, early in '46, and into a very good contract that had been negotiated on my behalf while I was still in the navy at RKO [Radio Pictures, Inc.]. It was a writer-director contract, and it was sort of a writer's dream come true. It was six months out of the year that I owed them and six months that I could take off to do my own work if I wanted to. It was for a lot of money, and in general it was just sort of an ideal contract, for the time. I ran into a problem, however, because the studio head who had given me the contract, Bill [William] Dozier, had left, and the new head of production was my old friend Dore Schary, who had helped me get my first job in pictures many years earlier. He didn't like a script I had written called **I Am Thinking of My Darling**, because it was fantasy, and he said quite frankly he had no taste for fantasy. I found myself in conflict with him, professionally, that is. We remained on very good terms. Because under my contract I had the right to turn down things that they wanted me to do and they had a right of course to turn down things that I wanted to do, we were at loggerheads for a while. I remember I wanted to do **All My Sons**, and the studio, meaning Schary, turned me down. Finally, we agreed on a project about a studio ghost to be played by Harpo Marx. I think I may have covered that--

LARRY CEPLAIR

You've covered that, yeah.

PAUL JARRICO

Nothing came of that, for reasons I've already explained: a conflict about the budget.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did Schary want to do sort of more realistic films or social criticism films? Was that his plan? Or he just didn't want to do comedy?

PAUL JARRICO

He didn't want to do that particular comedy. [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

I see, okay. [laughter]

PAUL JARRICO

It was a fantasy. Did I talk about the nature of that piece?

LARRY CEPLAIR

Yeah.

PAUL JARRICO

Actually, the last picture I did for them under the contract was **The White Tower**. **The White Tower** was based on a novel by James Ramsay Ullman, and it concerned an American flyer shot down in Switzerland during the war, who's dead tired. He regains the strength to go back into the war by tackling a mountain that was impossible to climb. He and a party of others that included a Nazi who was on furlough tried to climb this mountain. The basic theme, as Ullman developed it, was that the American regained the courage, in conflict with the Nazi and in conflict with the mountain, to go back into the war, into doing his duty as a fighter. By the time I was given the job of adapting this, it was '47, and there was no necessity for that particular kind of war propaganda, [laughter] I had done a couple of pictures that I felt had contributed to the notion that it was a duty to fight, especially in the Second World War. It seemed to me that there was an opportunity here to update the thing, and I did. I made the American a guy who had gone to Switzerland because he saw a third world war coming and he was determined to sit it out, along with neutral Switzerland and in neutral Switzerland. But in the course of a conflict with the mountain and with a postwar Nazi, he regained the courage to go back and fight against the coming of a third world war and to stop trying to escape his moral duty as I then saw it. The immediate producers saw nothing wrong with this concept, nor as far as I know, did Schary. But the picture got postponed because Eddie [Edward] Dmytryk, who was supposed to direct the film, got into trouble with the [House] Un-American Activities Committee as one of the Hollywood Ten. The picture was more or less shelved. I had worked with Dmytryk. I'd been in London during the period when Dmytryk and Adrian Scott were shooting a film called **So Well Remembered** in England, and I had been there so that I could work on the script of **The White Tower** and still be near Eddie Dmytryk, who was to direct it. Eddie Dmytryk was able to get away for a while, and he and I went mountain climbing in Switzerland in an effort to really make the script and the

film as truthful as possible. [laughter] But then my contract was not renewed after I completed that script. At the time I didn't tie this in with the fact that I was fairly well known as a radical and that the Hollywood Ten were already in deep trouble.

LARRY CEPLAIR

You didn't see that what had happened to the Ten had much larger ramifications for the radical community in Hollywood?

PAUL JARRICO

I guess I did in theory. I just didn't see it as applying to myself. [laughter] I guess I was not realistic in that sense. Sure, I understood that there was more involved than merely the fate of these ten people, that the cold war had started and that the witch-hunt was not probably going to stop with the Ten in Hollywood. But, nevertheless, I felt quite secure professionally and was rather surprised when my contract was not renewed, or when the option for my services was not picked up, for my continued services.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Let me ask you-- Everyone who I've talked to as a writer always mentions Dore Schary coming to the Screen Writers Guild after the Waldorf [Astoria Hotel] conference to sort of sell the blacklist of the Ten.

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

I assume you were there.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did that change your view of Schary, your relationship with him, that speech that he made? I mean, you could sort of tell what he said to you, to the group, and how you reacted to it.

Well, Schary said in effect that if we would just give the producers these ten heads, no other heads would roll. This was challenged from the floor quite vociferously by Dalton Trumbo and others. No, I had had mixed feelings about Schary politically for quite a while. On the other hand-- I mean, it was clear that Schary-- Schary was in a sense the cliche liberal who says, “I'm going to make this compromise now so that I will be in a stronger position to be effective for what I really believe later.” He kept making these compromises from thebeginning of his career, as far as I could see. I wouldn't say that I was surprised, though I also had heard that he and Sam [Samuel] Goldwyn, were the only two people at the Waldorf conference who had really tried to oppose the Waldorf resolution that declared the blacklist. He was in a sense doing what communists are supposed to do. You accept the collective decision whether you agree with it or not, [laughter] and you fight for the collective decision. He was doing it on the other side. I had a certain amount of sympathy for him, especially-- These relationships can get very complicated. When I came out of the navy and into this job, the strike was still going on of the Conference of Studio Unions. By the time Schary took over, the strike had been largely lost, but there were a lot of casualties of that strike, real-- I mean, carpenters and painters and people who had been out of work for a long, long time and were in real terrible trouble. Some of us were trying to raise some money just on a humanitarian basis. It was political, but it was basically to try to help some of the casualties of the strike. Because Schary was a friend of mine, I walked into his office, or I was there on some meeting, and I said to him privately, “How about helping this cause?” And he reached into his pocket and gave me $100, with the unnecessary admonition that his contribution was to be kept quiet. So, I mean, he was a friend, and at the same time he was a guy with whom I had been arguing politics for years, by that time for ten years. [laughter] So it was not simply, “Oh, my God, here's my friend doing the dirty work of the reactionaries.” It was sort of “Here he is again,” I mean in an impossible situation. At any rate, the picture **White Tower** was revived as a project a couple of years later. Interestingly enough, I was called back. By this time, Schary was gone, and a man named Sid Rogell was in charge of the studio. I was rehired, no longer as a contract writer, but simply as a freelance writer, to do some polishing on the **White Tower** script, which was going into production with Glenn Ford starring and with Ted Tetzlaff directing. Ted

Tetzlaff had been a fairly well known cameraman. He was no great shakes as a director. And my content remained as I've described it. I had intended an antiwar film. Except that while they were in the Alps shooting the picture, Glenn Ford apparently became aware that there were some antiwar things that he thought didn't belong in the movie, and so he insisted that they be cut out. Tetzlaff agreed, and they were simply eliminated. Now, this created problems for the movie. Rogell called me back-- I had finished. I had finished when they started shooting. It was too much to expect in the Hollywood situation at that time that the writer would be asked to come along or participate in the shooting, [laughter] though that did happen occasionally. I think I said at one point that that happened rarely, but it did happen to me on **Tom, Dick and Harry**, where Garson Kanin wanted me with him all during the shoot. But in this case I wasn't around. However, when Rogell was looking at the film after the picture was put together, when it was in post-production, something seemed wrong to him. He couldn't quite put his finger on it and he asked me to come look at it with him, or to look at it and discuss it with him. I said, “Well, they've made some cuts that happen to be quite crucial cuts of motivation, of theme.” And they didn't substitute something else in its place, in the place of what they took out. They didn't put in some other explanation-- a Freudian explanation that the mountain represented his mother, for instance. I mean, there is just a hole left in the meaning of the picture, what it adds up to, what it says. So it says nothing. It's just confusing. And Rogell didn't understand that from any theoretical point of view, but he did understand it in terms of something being wrong with the picture. But it was too late to fix. As a matter of fact, though Rogell had no politics that I knew of or that I could discern, I think he would have sided with me if I had been around and in a position to protest when they made those cuts. Or at least have given me a chance to substitute something instead, as I say. [tape recorder off]

LARRY CEPLAIR

So nothing was ever done? I mean, the movie just came out the way they had shot it, with the cuts in it?

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah, yeah. It wasn't a terrible movie, it just wasn't a very good movie. It did quite well. I recorded it just the other week, and I looked at part of it when I was recording. I felt it wasn't well directed, it wasn't particularly well acted, but it wasn't terrible. I did do one other picture while I was still under contract at RKO, but it wasn't for RKO. I was borrowed by Lazar Wechsler in Switzerland, who had produced some very interesting films, including one called, I believe, **The Last Chance**, in which some German Jews were trying to get into Switzerland, trying to escape from Hitierism, and they were barred, and then they made a tragic trek across the Alps trying to sneak into Switzerland. It was quite an extraordinary film. This same man produced a film called **The Search**, which Fred Zinneman directed and which Montgomery Clift starred in. It was Montgomery Cliffs first major film, or the first to be shown. Actually, he had starred in a picture called **Red River**. He had shot a picture called **Red River** before he played in **The Search**, but **The Search** was released first. And it won several Academy Awards. It was very well received. It dealt with refugee children, stray children in the aftermath of the war, roving around Europe, lost, separated from their parents, most of their parents having been killed. Montgomery Clift played an American soldier on duty in postwar Germany who adopted a little boy whose mother was looking for him, trudging around Europe looking for her little boy. It was a tearjerker, but based on sufficient reality so that it was worth the tears, so to speak. I mean, it was not simply sentimental. My job on that was a very interesting job. It's a picture that I did make a real contribution to and one of the few that I was really quite proud of subsequently. There had been a very, very long script in German, something like 250 pages, as I recall. A good script, but ponderous. And since it was not only shot in English, but since the characterization of the American soldier played by Montgomery Clift and his attempts to teach the little boy English were sort of crucial in the movie, Zinneman had prevailed on the producer to import an American writer, namely me, to work on the script before it was shot. I had cut the script down to about 115 or 120 pages from the 250 pages, and I had of course, working from a literal translation of the script into English, put it into colloquial English. I had rewritten to a considerable extent the character of the American soldier and his relationship with the kid as far as dialogue went certainly, though not-- I mean, the basic notion that this American soldier became very attached to the kid and the kid to the American soldier was part of the original screenplay. I was asked what

credit I wanted, and I made a joke which cost me an Academy Award. [laughter] I said I wanted “subtractional dialogue.” [laughter] And I received, without any further consultation with me about how the credits really would read, credit that read “additional dialogue.” Well, it wasn't entirely false as a credit, except that the picture was an original screenplay--that is to say, there was no story that it was based on and it was nominated for both original story and for screenplay. Two separate categories. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences kept changing its definition of writing and how to define their writing awards over the years. That particular year, if you had an additional dialogue credit, you couldn't share in the original story credit, which made a certain amount of sense. But it was difficult to divide that screenplay into “screenplay” and “original story,” and the picture won for story. So Richard Schweizer, the original writer, got an Oscar, and so did David Wechsler, an apprentice to the original writer, who happened be the son of the producer. His name appeared in very small letters as a “contributor to the screenplay.” He got an Academy Award, but I did not. However, when the Writers Guild and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences published a book called **Who Wrote the Picture and What Else Did He Write?**, my name was listed as one of the winners of an Academy Award for **The Search**. I don't claim that award, but I've kicked myself several times for not having made a fuss at the time the credits were established, for not having asked to share in the screenplay credit. So that's the story of the Academy Award I didn't win.

LARRY CEPLAIR

But deserved, at least.

PAUL JARRICO

Probably.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Okay. Now, was that the last--?

PAUL JARRICO

That was my last picture under contract to RKO, because I-- But, as I say, I was on loan-out to Praesens Film, which was a Swiss company that belonged to Lazar Wechsler. He distributed through MGM [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.].

RKO decided, soon after I came back, that they would not lift my option, and I found myself free-lancing again. Though it wasn't as cushy a period professionally as the two years or so I'd been under contract at RKO, I found that I was able to pick up a number of assignments between '48 and the spring of '51, when I got called before the committee and blacklisted, and some of the jobs were interesting. I did one for Mike [Michael] Todd in New York about a runaway bus, a Fifth Avenue bus driver who got tired of driving the same route every day and took off with his passengers on a jaunt to Florida or something. It never got made. I adapted for Columbia Pictures [Industries, Inc.] a book called **The Big Eye**, in which some astronomers warned the people of the earth that an asteroid or some large mass from another solar system had entered ours and was plunging towards the earth, and the earth was going to be destroyed. And the scientists and military people of Russia and the United States got together, and by exploding all of their atom bombs in one direction, they moved the earth slightly, and it managed to escape this mass that was going to destroy the earth. Except that it was then revealed that the astronomers had pulled a hoax, that they knew that this mass was going to miss the earth, but it was their way of getting the earth to save itself from destruction. And so it was a good strong antiwar, anti-nuclear arms race script. I finished it a few days before the Korean War broke out, and it was shelved immediately, no bones about it. It was shelved because of its content, because we were now at war. [laughter] So much for antiwar material in Hollywood films. I had some other assignments, I forget. [pause] Oh, there was one called **Not Wanted**, about an unwed mother, that I did for Ida Lupino. That one did get made. Then I was hired by RKO again, at the end of '50 or very beginning of '51, to work on something called **The Las Vegas Story**-Howard Hughes by this time was well in command at RKO, but not really running the studio. That is to say, he owned the studio, but didn't busy himself with what got made very much, unless it was a personal film of his own. At any rate, I had no contact with Howard Hughes until the day that I was subpoenaed to appear before the Un-American Activities Committee. There had been some publicity about people who were being looked for. In other words, the newspapers had already picked up the names of people who were going to be served, and there was some publicity about the difficulty that the marshals were having finding certain people. I was one of the names on that list, and I was in fact trying to duck the subpoena, except that it became impossible to

duck, [laughter] since I was working at RKO. They finally found me at home, on Sherbourne Drive near Third [Street] and La Cienega [Boulevard], where my family and I lived. Because of this publicity about the search for "missing" people, the newspapermen were there with the marshal when I got served. And I played a little scene about having been there all the time and what was all the mystery, and I was hardly on the lam since I was working at RKO. But aside from this little byplay, which was mostly a game anyway, I said to the newspaper people more seriously that if I had to choose between crawling in the mud with Larry Parks or going to jail like my courageous friends the Hollywood Ten, they could be sure I would choose the latter. And that was quoted very accurately in the papers the next morning. When I arrived at work, drove to the studio gate as I did every morning, I was stopped by the cops at the gate and not permitted onto the lot. And I said, "But I've got my personal papers up there, and my whiskey." [laughter] And they said, "No, we have strict orders that you're not to be admitted into the studio." So that was before I appeared before the committee, as I did a couple of weeks later.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Had you finished the script?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, but--

LARRY CEPLAIR

What was the story about essentially, in a nutshell?

PAUL JARRICO

It was about a sheriff of the county in which Las Vegas is--I forget what it's called--played by Victor Mature, and a woman with whom he had once had a love affair. She is now in Las Vegas with a wealthy man whose repu-- There's something wrong with his reputation. I think the man she's with gets killed, and she's a suspect, but the sheriff and the woman revive their love affair, or he has never forgotten it. It had some tired **Casablanca** elements, and it was a very run-of-the-mill kind of melodrama. I was making some final changes, but I had finished a script, and it was about to go into production. Howard Hughes ordered my script rewritten so that I would not get credit. I mean, I was fired,

but now it was a question of making sure that I had no credit. The writers the studio gave this assignment to did their best to change the thing a lot, but the picture was going into production very quickly, and they didn't change it enough. It went for arbitration, I think automatically--I don't recall asking for the arbitration--to the Writers Guild, which had control of credits, and the Writers Guild awarded me the first of a couple of credits. Howard Hughes announced that he would be damned if he would give a communist like me--Would have my name on his picture. If the Writers Guild wanted to strike, as far as he was concerned they could strike. Then I sued Howard Hughes, and Howard Hughes sued me, countersued. Or it was the other way around. Anyway, he claimed that I'd violated the morals clause of my contract by refusing to cooperate with the Un-American Activities Committee, and I sued him for denying me a credit that I was entitled to. And the Writers Guild sued him for violating the minimum basic agreement between RKO and the guild. And he countersued them for interfering with his business, or whatever. It was a highly publicized fight, brouhaha, because anything that Howard Hughes was connected with got enormous publicity. The witch-hunt and reds in Hollywood and all of that was getting a lot of publicity too. So the combination of Howard Hughes and reds in Hollywood became sort of big news in all the papers, especially the trade press, but also the downtown papers. It came to trial. My suit and his countersuit came to trial before a superior court judge, Orlando H. Rhodes. I was represented by Ed [Edward] Mosk, who died recently and was a friend and a good lawyer. We said that it was not immoral and couldn't possibly be a violation of a morals clause to assert one's constitutional rights before a committee. Hughes's lawyers tried to prove that I had placed myself in moral obloquy by refusing to answer these questions before the committee. They had some American Legion people get up and say they would never go see a picture with my name on it, and we had some reputable people get up saying that what I did was a good thing, not a bad thing. I tried to get into the record my assertion that Howard Hughes had broken every one of the Ten Commandments, and who the hell was he to talk about morality. [laughter] But apparently his character was not germane to the-- Anyway, I lost. He testified himself. I'm told it was his last public appearance. I mean, he was well known as a recluse before this, but he was so determined to win this case that he appeared as a witness. They rigged up a sound system in the courtroom because he was hard of hearing. And the

judge ruled-- It was not a jury trial, which may have been a mistake on our part. Or perhaps not. The atmosphere was not exactly friendly to us. It was '52, not exactly a good year. [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

Not a good year for communists. [laughter]

PAUL JARRICO

The judge ruled that I had indeed placed myself in public obloquy, and he ruled for Hughes. Five minutes later--and this always amused me in retrospect--the judge shook hands with me and said, “It's a pleasure to have been associated with you.” [laughter] So the obloquy did not extend all that far. Now, the great significance of that suit was not that I lost, but that the guild buckled. The guild lawyers came to a meeting of the guild at which I was present, a crowded meeting of the guild, and said that the RKO studio lawyers had found that the contract between RKO and the Writers Guild had a serious legal flaw in it. The contract was not valid. It had nothing to do, presumably, with me. It's just that they had uncovered in the course of the conflict something that the guild lawyers themselves were forced to admit was a serious, serious defect in the contract. However, RKO's lawyers would allow the guild lawyers to heal this defect if the guild would agree to just one simple little thing, which was that the producers were not obligated to give credit to people who failed to cooperate with the Un-American Activities Committee or to clear themselves of charges of communism, and so on, the language of the Waldorf declaration. And the guild surrendered. The membership voted to accept this, which was not simply an amendment to the credit procedure, but which surrendered control of credits to the producers. Now, the guild had fought for years to get that control over credits! Half of the stories about what happened afterwards, about phony names on the screen and people winning Academy Awards under phony names and all of those scandals which Trumbo finally managed to turn into ridicule of the producers and of the whole blacklist, a lot of that stemmed from the fact that the guild had surrendered control of credits. It took them decades, something like twenty years, before they regained that control.

1.6. TAPE NUMBER: III, SIDE TWO

MARCH 13, 1990

LARRY CEPLAIR

Okay, well, was that then your last writing for a Hollywood studio for the next several decades?

PAUL JARRICO

It was certainly the end of my writing career in Hollywood under my own name, or under what had become my name.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you write on the motion picture “black market”?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, yes.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Do you want to tell us a little bit about your black market career?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, before I turned really to working on the black market, I turned to trying to make films independently, using the reservoir of talent that had been made available because of the blacklist: the efforts in which I was partnered with Adrian Scott and Herbert Biberman, the efforts that led to the production of Salt of the Earth, though originally we planned many more pictures than one. So I would say that between '51, spring of '51, when I appeared before the committee and was most uncooperative and knew that I was to be blacklisted, as far as Hollywood assignments went-- My efforts for the next three years were almost wholly devoted to the plans to make independent productions, and ultimately to this singleindependent production called **Salt of the Earth**.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Why don't we hold the story of that and go back and pick up your developing political conscience. Then we can come to '51 and your testimony and **Salt of the Earth**, etc. Okay?

PAUL JARRICO

Right.

LARRY CEPLAIR

All right, so why don't we just go back, and you sort of tell us your political biography--when you became a radical, etc.

PAUL JARRICO

My political biography really starts with my parents. My father [Aaron Shapiro], as I've probably told you, was an ardent socialist Zionist, and my mother [Jennie Shapiro] was inclined towards Emma Goldman anarchism. So I came from a radical family. The choices that I faced as I reached some maturity were not between conservative and liberal thought, but among different kinds of radical thought. I mean, more specifically, between socialist versus communist doctrines. A feeling I had-- I considered myself a socialist just by inheritance, but as I reached the age of eighteen or so, in 1933, it seemed to me that the socialists weren't militant enough and that the communists were the ones who were leading the hunger marches and trying to organize the unorganized workers and leading demonstrations for relief, for welfare, and so on. I was increasingly drawn to the communist side of this issue, of this division between the socialists and the communists, which led to some conflicts with my father--not bitter conflicts, debates. I may have told the story of my father's death and its connection with this political fight. Did I? Do you know?

LARRY CEPLAIR

I don't remember. It might have been on Tape I, but I just don't remember.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, my father was a very vigorous man, and I was very, very fond of him indeed. A very open and active and intelligent man. He was a lawyer. He was a people's lawyer, a left-wing lawyer, represented lost causes vigorously. [laughter] Wobblies and people being threatened with deportation, immigrants in trouble, and trade unions when they were struggling and before they became big and institutionalized, massive, respectable organizations. He was taken ill with a gallbladder problem, and he was in a hospital, he was operated on. And he died of complications of the operation, something that

wouldn't have happened not too long afterwards when penicillin was developed. But at that time, there was still-- This was at the very end of '33. It was not too uncommon for peritonitis to develop after an operation and for people to die of operations of that sort. At any rate, he was dying. I didn't know that--he didn't know that--but he was getting weaker, that was clear. I was reading a book called **Germany Enters the Third Reich**. One of the points of argument between us was that--It was a reflection of a grave argument going on in Germany and elsewhere when Hitler came to power. The socialists and the communists had been at each others throats. The socialists said it was the fault of the communists that Hitler had come to power, and the communists said it was the fault of the socialists. Of course, we know now that if there was a fault at all, it was the fault of their failure to unite against Hitler. But at that point, each was still pointing the finger at the other. And this book that I found called **Germany Enters the Third Reich** was written by a man named Calvin B. Hoover. He was a, quote, "objective," unquote, journalist; that is to say, he was not himself apparently politically partisan. His account of the rise of Hitler and of German politics that permitted the rise of Hitler seemed to blame the socialists more than it blamed the communists. So I was reading excerpts of this book to my father as he lay dying, and he was trying to answer, though, as I could see, he was getting weaker. It became kind of symbolic for me. There was a great irony involved for me in the fact that we were arguing these fundamental questions as he lay dying. In terms of political debt, you know, whatever impulses led me to become a communist certainly originated with his impulses to be a socialist. At any rate, after he died-- He died on New Year's Eve, the last day of '33, just before the beginning of '34. During '34, I became a member of the Young Communist League [YCL]. I played a minor role in the [International] Longshoremen's [Association] strike of '34 as one of a group of students who went down to San Pedro to tell the followers of Harry Bridges, who were really trying to fight their own conservative leadership at that point as well as the people who ran things on the docks--the companies, the warehouse companies and the shipping companies--that the students were behind them. I became more and more active and more and more devoted to the communist position. Ironically, that was the year that Upton Sinclair had captured the Democratic Party under the slogan of End Poverty in California and the year that Louis B. Mayer and other reactionaries in the movie industry had organized to make fake newsreels

showing bums from all over the United States coming to California because Upton Sinclair was going to be elected and was going to be handing out the people's hard-earned money to the bums. [laughter] In this campaign, despite the fact that my father and my uncle had been fervent supporters of Upton Sinclair, who had been an active socialist before he ran as a Democrat, I was not a partisan of Upton Sinclair at all.

LARRY CEPLAIR

The Communist Party officially attacked him, didn't it?

PAUL JARRICO

It did. I don't know how much of an effect they had. He lost, basically, because there were three candidates, three major candidates. Between Upton Sinclair, who got some 800,000 votes, and a man named [Raymond] Haight, who got 300,000 or 400,000 votes-- I think between the two of them they had more votes than [Frank] Merriam, who was elected with something like 1.2 million. I haven't got the figures exactly straight, but it was not-- I don't think it was the communists who defeated him. On the other hand, we might have made a difference if we had been for him. But to get back to my own politics or political career, I was then, during the year '34-'35, at the University of California, Berkeley, which was having one of the really exciting years politically that it has every thirty years. [laughter] We're about due, I think, for--There were antiwar strikes, there was an academic freedom strike. Some student leaders at UCLA were expelled, and we had a big campaign up at Berkeley in their favor. I was very, very active in these activities and in the YCL, which had a lot of very lively and intelligent young people in it at Berkeley, at any rate, some of whom remained my friends for decades afterward. I think I may have told you before about this strike for academic freedom, how we as a relatively small group were able to move a much larger group, which in turn was able to move a far larger group, so that one had a kind of demonstration of what it meant to be in the vanguard and how, properly applied, the dynamics of political activity could grow, could grow geometrically, in fact, rather than arithmetically. I don't know what good the lesson did me later, but it was instructive. I remained a radical, though not as active during my senior year, but my senior year was spent at the University of Southern California, which was not exactly a hotbed by its nature. Anyway, by the time of my

senior year, I was concentrating on trying to write a novel. Then I graduated in '36 and started trying to be a screenwriter, partly by accident. I knew I wanted to be a writer. I didn't know that I wanted to be a screenwriter until I got recommended for a junior writer's job at MGM. I didn't get the job, but that sort of gave me the bug of trying to be a screenwriter. I started writing-- I wrote an original story for the screen and managed to get it to Dore Senary, who was not yet a producer but was a well-respected screenwriter. He liked the story, recommended me and the story to his agent [Nat Goldstone], or to an agent, and subsequently recommended me to a friend of his [Nat Perrin], who gave me my first job as a screenwriter in '37. I had graduated in '36. So we're back on that professional escalator which I've already told you about. But politically, at a meeting to raise money for the Loyalists in Spain held at the Philharmonic Auditorium, at which [Andre] Malraux spoke and at which a lot of money was raised for ambulances for Spain, I ran into a communist activist whom I knew and who asked what I was doing. I said I just got a job as a screenwriter, I was an employed screenwriter. She said, “Would you like to be put in touch with the [Communist] Party people in Hollywood?” I said yes. And she did. She arranged that, and I met with some young communists in Hollywood. There was no distinction between the YCL and the party in Hollywood, but these were basically younger people, people of my age. I became active in the Communist Party in Hollywood almost from the time that I became a screenwriter and remained active in a variety of ways. Guild work, work within the Writers Guild--in other words, trying to strengthen the Writers Guild, which had not yet won recognition as the bargaining agent--was one of the political concentrations. Using our talents as writers to help organizations that needed writing services for leaflets or pamphlets became another way of being politically active. And organizing or helping to organize united front activities that could be described basically as the left wing of the New Deal was another concentration. I was active in all of these ways. I should point out that after this obvious mistake of not supporting Upton Sinclair, the line of the party changed. It changed not because of Upton Sinclair, but because of [Georgi] Dmitrov and the rise of Hitler that I had been discussing earlier. Dmitrov was a German communist who was accused of having burnt the Reichstag, which was the excuse Hitler used to consolidate his power. It was a famous trial, in which Dmitrov was given the right to defend himself and made a stirring defense, but his name then became attached to a change of

policy--decided in the Soviet Union, but then adopted internationally--which was the policy of the united front. In other words, this argument that I'd been having with my father about who was to blame for the rise of Hitler did get resolved, at least for the communists, in favor of a change in line in which they stopped attacking the socialists as “social fascists” and “running dogs of fascism,” and so on, [laughter] and began courting the socialists and liberals and progressives of all kinds to join in a popular front, a united front, against fascism, against the continued rise of fascism and in favor of collective security, which is to say in favor of urging England and France and the United States in particular to join with the Soviet Union in opposing German expansionism and the threat of a second world war. I mention all that here because after the days of student radicalism, which had very little to do with international politics in any event, which had basically to do with what was happening on campus, my party activities were almost entirely during the period of-- I mean, were for many, many years, between '37 certainly and '47--

LARRY CEPLAIR

There was a recess while you were in the service, wasn't there, where you couldn't really be active in party affairs?

PAUL JARRICO

That's true, that's true. [pause] Well, I would say until '56, when the [Nikita] Khrushchev report came out in the-- Which really more or less ended political activities, communist political activities, for myself and most of my friends. The line was, except for the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact, which lasted less than two years, lasted from the end of August '39 until July of '41, when Hitler attacked Russia-- June 22, was that it?

LARRY CEPLAIR

June 22.

PAUL JARRICO

Except for that period, it was consistently united front and collective security. I mean, those were the two hallmarks of the communist position. So McCarthyism aside, I never really felt that I was out of the mainstream of American politics. I felt I was on the left of American politics, but I certainly

didn't feel like I was some foreign agent, not just in the conventional sense of some spy for Russia, but, you know, in the sense of some man from Mars who was not really connected with what was happening and not really in tune with what was happening in his own country. I don't say that as any kind of apology. I think we made any number of stupid mistakes. I think we also accomplished a number of very good things, or things that I for one am certainly not at all ashamed of. We helped to build the guilds in Hollywood, the talent guilds, and we helped to build a lot of good, strong organizations supporting the social welfare programs of the New Deal. We were instrumental in building the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, which played an honorable role in fighting Hitler before it became really all that popular to fight Hitler. We were, indeed, "premature antifascists," a phrase used as an insult against us, but one of which one can be proud as well. So if you have-- If there are questions you want to ask me--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Yeah, I have a couple of specific questions. First, some theoretical questions. Did you consider yourself a Marxist, and did you consider yourself well read in Marxism?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, one of the things that we did as members of the Communist Party was to try to study Marxism, or Marxism-Leninism, as we called it. Certainly I read quite a bit of Marx, or popularizations of Marx, and certainly quite a bit of Lenin. Yeah, I considered myself a Marxist. I didn't consider myself a leading theoretician in any way, but as somebody who was deeply interested in social science and thought that Marxism had a lot to contribute to an understanding of society and history and forces at work in history, and also philosophically. Since I'm interested in all of these subjects and would have been even if I wasn't particularly directed towards Marxist works, all of this was very interesting to me. Yes, I was certainly involved in the theoretical discussions and reading.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you see yourself as part of a revolutionary movement? I mean, did you see that the American Communist Party was going to, in effect, revolutionize

American society? What I mean is, if you looked sort of two or three years down the line, where was it going, did you think, or did you hope, I guess?

PAUL JARRICO

I thought that there might come a time when there would be a basic change in this country from a capitalist economic system to a socialist economic system, and that when such a time came it would probably be accompanied by some very, very sharp conflict. It wasn't going to be some automatic, peaceful transition. But that was pretty far down the line, and I knew--or I felt strongly that--the reformist line-- There were leftist critics of the Communist Party who accused us of being revisionist and reformist and so on, so I did know the difference between a revolutionary line and a reformist line. I felt that this was very smart, that this was the period for a reformist line, and I accepted it. I accepted most of the [Earl] Browder line, which was in retrospect attacked as having been too compromising, not at all left enough in fighting for the interests of the working class against the capitalist class. The war played a very big-- And the fear of fascism, the need to fight fascism or to get as many people as possible into the fight against fascism, into the united front. When the war came, the need for unity in the war effort certainly did mean that you discouraged strikes, you discouraged-- You didn't exacerbate the class struggle. [laughter] You might recognize that it existed, and you might recognize that there was no way of arranging for it not to exist. Nevertheless, certainly during the war period, we discouraged anything that would affect the united war effort. So there were people who said, “But that's silly. This is the time when you should be agitating for workers' rights, not downplaying workers' rights.” I mean, these were not things we were unconscious of. These were conscious decisions that we accepted, if not to say made. I mean, I wasn't determining the line of the Communist Party. I was one of the stalwart defenders of the line. In that sense, I may very well have been too unquestioning, but nevertheless these various shifts made sense to me. I mean, they were not just, “Uh-oh, to the right march, to the left march, backward march.” I mean, it wasn't just accepting orders. It seemed to me that when the line did change that there were usually good reasons for it, for the line to change.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So you didn't have any serious problems, then, when, after the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the line became one of, in effect, neutrality between the fascists, say, on one side, and England and France on the other? You weren't troubled by that?

PAUL JARRICO

I was troubled by that. That was the one switch that did trouble me and troubled me a lot. But my feeling at the time was that Stalin had double-crossed the double-crossers. That England, France, and the United States had made a conscious decision that they preferred Hitler to attack the Soviet Union--that they had made this decision at the time of Munich, when instead of joining the Soviet Union in defending Czechoslovakia against Hitler's grab--That Stalin had done a very smart thing in double-crossing them after they had double-crossed him, and that he was buying time in which he would prepare, but that ultimately he would be fighting Hitler. If anybody was going to save the world from fascism, it was going to be Stalin and the Soviet Union. This overestimated Stalin, because unfortunately he didn't use that time properly, and it cost the Soviet Union dearly. However, that was my own rationalization. About “The Yanks are not coming” and our joining with the America First [Committee]--I mean being on the same side as the most reactionary isolationists of America--I was embarrassed by it. That the war is imperialist on both sides, which was part of the communist rationale of the period, I didn't quite buy. On the other hand, I remained a disciplined member of the party. I would tell people who were appalled by our shift in line, “Don't worry! The day will come when the Soviet Union will save you yet.” [laughter] But those were not public declarations; those were private assurances. And I obviously was trying to assure myself as much as I was anybody else.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Let me ask you about a few other, you know, sort of charges that are often made against Communist Party members of the thirties. How were you able to square in your own mind the notion that all these old Bolsheviks, all these revolutionary heroes, all of a sudden were accused of being subverters of the revolution, liquidators, and were summarily being tried and shot?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I worked out a really simplistic explanation of why they confessed, and it was they confessed because they were guilty. So I was guilty of the most naive kind of acceptance of the Stalinist line on that. On the other hand, when in 1951 a guy I had met and known [Ota Katz] was executed in Czechoslovakia as an imperialist tool, I certainly knew enough to know that this was put up. This was not on the level. The accusations were not true, and certainly I was deeply troubled by that. But this is considerably after the period that you're talking about. You're talking about the trials of the thirties.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Yeah.

PAUL JARRICO

The trials of the thirties I simply accepted. I didn't know enough about the inner inside of the Soviet history. If Stalin said Trotsky was a traitor and Trotskyites were enemies of the socialist revolution, I accepted that. By '51 I was beginning to have very strong doubts, and in retrospect beginning to have strong doubts about what I had accepted in the thirties.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What about the reports that were coming out of the Soviet Union, you know, of famine in the Ukraine, of numbers of peasants dying in forced collectivization? About the reports coming out of Spain that communist agents were killing rivals on the left? How did you deal with those various reports?

PAUL JARRICO

About the deaths in the collectivization of agriculture, they were before my time, and I didn't know too much about it, but I suspected that they were exaggerated and that they were just used as propaganda by the enemies of socialism. Again, until later. Then in retrospect, they seemed like terrible crimes committed by Stalin and Stalinism. About Spain, I had no doubts at all. That is to say, I felt that the only ones that communists were interfering with were people who were trying to disrupt the united front. If there were separatists or anarchists or Trotskyites in Barcelona, then they were people who were raising conflicts within the united front that should not be raised. I

didn't really know what role the communists were playing, except that of heroic defenders of the legitimate government of Spain, and the only ones who had rallied internationally when England and France and the United States were trying to strangle--Had joined in this nonintervention policy, which was designed to strangle the Spanish government at the very same time that Italy and Germany were pouring help into Spain for Franco.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Okay. The last question I want to ask is the question of was there among the young people in your party group in the late thirties ongoing discussion about whether or not you as communists or Marxists could change the ways in which Hollywood made movies.

PAUL JARRICO

Oh, we certainly were involved, usually as individuals rather than as groups, in efforts to affect the content of films. Some of us had a more cynical attitude than others. That is to say, some of the people who had been around longer said, “It can't be done.” Not for theoretical reasons. I mean, later we debated at some length about base and superstructure: since the function of culture and of law and of religion and so on was to defend the base and since the base was capitalist, that therefore you couldn't really expect to change the superstructure unless the base was changed. This became a theoretical justification for not having illusions, so-called, about affecting content in any basic way. That came later. I mean, those debates. But the older screenwriters in general, communist or noncommunist, just felt that it was a corrupt industry, as far as its product went, and a corrupt community, and power lay in the hands of anticultural barbarians, [laughter] or at least ignoramuses, like the moguls, about whose stupidity we had many funny stories. And that you just couldn't really affect movies. But some of us were much more idealistic, and I don't use the word in the Marxist philosophical sense. [laughter] We just were dewy-eyed or wide-eyed about the possibility of writing movies or directing movies or acting in movies that would affect millions and millions of viewers positively. I mean, that we could affect the content of films. Even if we were more or less forced to realize that we could never have anything really radical on the screen, we did think we could have a more humane attitude towards human beings in general and as individuals--humanistic values. We

did think we could have a fairer picture of women and of their capacities, of their value, and not just treat women as sexual objects. We did think that minorities could be represented with greater dignity.

1.7. TAPE NUMBER: IV, SIDE ONE

MARCH 14, 1990

LARRY CEPLAIR

On the last tape I had asked you about what Marxists thought they could do with movies, and you had started to say you could do more with races, with women. I think we got cut off as you were just starting to discuss working people.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, the accusation that the reds in the Hollywood movie industry tried to influence the content of films has been used, of course, as an attempt to sound a warning against an un-American infiltration into mass communications, designed to corrupt the minds of the American people, and so on. I have said jokingly that we certainly did try to influence the content of film, but we were not very successful. However, our attempts certainly did not include what might be called revolutionary content. For one thing, revolution was not our line during the period of our greatest strength and influence in Hollywood. Two, we certainly were not under the illusion that our employers, the heads of the motion picture studios, would ever allow a revolutionary content, even if we had wanted to make films with such content. However, we did feel, or many of us did feel, that we could at least get more democratic content, more humanistic content. This included a less sexist attitude towards women, pictures in which women played positive roles and demonstrated their independence and their ability to handle things and to be active characters rather than passive characters. This included an attempt to show minority peoples with some dignity instead of playing the servile roles that distinguished most portrayals of minority people on the screen. This included an occasional attempt to get working-class characters on the screen, because Hollywood films were noted for dealing basically with glitzy people, with upper-class people, and the comedies in general dealt with people of means who didn't have to worry about money. So that a picture like **Marty**,

say, just as an example, dealing with a working-class guy, a picture like **Marty** was a novelty. One would hardly think that this was a difficult assignment, to get a more humanistic portrayal of ordinary people on the screen, but nevertheless it was very difficult, and it was something that we were determined to do, or tried very hard to do. I've made jokes about Ginger Rogers's mother complaining that Dalton Trumbo had sneaked in a line into a picture called, **Tender Comrade**, in which some girls during the war took a house together and had to adjust to communal living. Trumbo, according to Lela Rogers, had Ginger Rogers say, “Share and share alike, that's democracy.” I mean, the idea that this was some sort of subversive line is so ridiculous, and yet that the accusation could be taken seriously at the time of the HUAC [House Committee on Un-American Activities] hearings was an indication of how ignorance and stupidity really were prevailing during that period. I also made a joke in some speech or other about a line that I gave to Burgess Meredith in a picture called **Tom, Dick and Harry**, in which he said, “I don't believe in every man for himself. I get lonesome.” [laughter] And I said that became the battle cry of the Chinese Red Army. Well, it's all very well to make jokes about this, but the fact is we were extremely limited in what we were able to say. But it is absolutely the desire of any writer to express ideas, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with writers trying to influence content. That's their job.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Can you point to any movies that were made, say, between 1937 and 1947 that you think were better for having been written by people on the left? I mean, maybe there are some examples of some things that people were able to do that might not have been done had there not been a left-wing community in Hollywood.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I would have to look at a list, but basically if you look at the films in which people accused of having been communists were involved, you will find that they are generally more humanistic than the ordinary run of films. I don't think there's any question about it. I look at old films on TV and on cable and on VCR cassettes, and I'm struck by the fact that writers really did have an influence on content. It was not profound, but it was there.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Okay, well, now I assume that while you were in the service you had to give up any political activity. Is that a correct assumption, or were you still able to do some--?

PAUL JARRICO

(

Well, there's an anecdote about that. I've told you about my being in the navy at the tail end of the war, stationed at Treasure Island and entertaining the entertainers.

Mr. Jarrico added the following bracketed section during his review of the transcript.

) After the war, in '47, the man who had been my superior officer and who had brought me onto the base as his assistant before he left ran into the commodore who had run the base. The commodore, the former commodore, was now vice president in charge of personnel for Willys Overland. He said, “I've been reading about these Hollywood people who have been called to Washington by the Un-American Activities Committee, and I was struck by the absence of a name.” My former officer said, “What name? What do you mean?” He said, “How come Jarrico wasn't called?” And my former officer said, “Why should he have been called?” The commodore said, “Oh, he was a communist. We had that on his record when he came on board. In fact, we had him followed all the time he was there.” [laughter] My former officer said, “Why didn't you tell me? I was his commanding officer.” And the commodore said, “Oh, we were watching you, too.” [laughter] The fact is that I did from time to time get into civvies and go to meetings of the longshoremen's branch of the Communist Party, which were big open meetings, and not exactly under cover. So if they watched me, they observed that. I didn't shed my politics, obviously, when I was in the service, though the opportunities to be active were more or less limited.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Well, when the war ended, what position did you take on the controversy that arose when Earl Browder had created the Communist Political Association and then Jacques Duclos wrote that article criticizing it?

PAUL JARRICO

I went along with the change in line, as I usually did.

LARRY CEPLAIR

You mean the hardening of it.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. I was for Browder. I thought that the cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States could continue after the war. When Duclos wrote an article saying that Browder was kidding himself and kidding us and that we were kidding ourselves, it seemed to me to make sense, and, as a matter of fact, I don't know how long before the cold war became obvious Duclos said this, but his particular position proved to be quite justified in terms of later events.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Well, did you see that things were changing so that a harder line was necessary, or did the Duclos letter sort of point that out to you?

PAUL JARRICO

I would say that the Duclos letter made sense. No, I wouldn't claim to have been ahead of the party in the United States in general.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Now, shortly after the Duclos letter, Albert Maltz got caught, sort of, in the switch in line. He'd written that article ["What Shall We Ask of Writers?"] in **New Masses** in which he said that a writer couldn't really follow the communist line and be an effective artist, and then an enormous outcry rose that he was sort of still following the Browder line, being too soft. What was your reaction to Maltz's article?

PAUL JARRICO

I was very much in favor of Maltz's position and somewhat upset at his recanting his position. I participated in some of the meetings in which he was pressured to recant his position, though I wasn't among those who were pressuring him. I mean it was one thing to agree with the Duclos analysis of the postwar period in international terms. It was another to agree with what I considered to be a vulgarization of the Marxist position about the role of literature. I could see where, under certain circumstances, art was a weapon and narrowly defined, defined in terms of its immediate utility for a struggle. On the other hand, there were plenty of quotations in the Marxist classics about art being something that was broader and deeper than simply an immediate propaganda weapon. So I thought Maltz's position was correct and that the position of those who pressured him to recant was incorrect. But that, as a matter of fact, was closer to what our real problems were in Hollywood, where the fight between those who said, “You can't influence the content of film basically, because it belongs to the superstructure, and the role of the superstructure is to defend the base,” and so on, and those of us who said, “We can influence the content of film, and we have to try--” That became, for me, the decisive fight between right and left in Hollywood, in the cultural section, in the cultural work. So I was almost consistently on what was called the right wing, the revisionist, [laughter] or the “right opportunist” side of that, against what I called the “left sectarian” side of that argument.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Maybe you could just talk a little bit about that at this point. Just tell us sort of when it began, when it ended, etc.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, it was recurrent for all the years that I was in the Hollywood party, which is to say from '37 to '57. But it really came to a head, interestingly enough, after we were defeated by the Un-American Activities Committee and after we were in full retreat, after most of us had been blacklisted out of the industry in any event. [laughter] The theoretical fight continued and came to a head, as I recall, as late as 1954, when we had some very, very serious seminars, discussions, in an attempt to come to grips with the theoretical rather than simply the tactical essence of this question. There I continued my “right opportunist” line. Jack [John Howard] Lawson, who had sort of switched

back and forth several times, was then the leader, absolute leader, of what was the national cultural commission line, which reflected very directly the line of [Andrei] Zhdanov in the Soviet Union, and that was about as intense a disagreement as we ever came to grips with. But it was there underlying our disagreements all the time--I mean, all during these twenty years that I've mentioned.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was it generational at all? I mean, were the younger people sort of on the right and the older people on the left in this theoretical dispute?

PAUL JARRICO

In one sense, but it was-- The old-timers were old-timers not simply in terms of party history. They were tired of fighting in Hollywood to change the content of films because they'd been defeated so many times. I mean, take somebody like John Bright, a wonderful guy, absolutely devoted to all of the ideas of the left, ethnic equality and laborers' rights and all of these things. He gave up trying to get things of that sort into movies. Because he was an early screenwriter--that is to say, soon after sound came in he was writing movies. He was a pioneer in the writing of gangster films at Warner Brothers [Pictures, Inc.] and [James] Cagney films, and so on. Sure, if he had a chance to get some humanistic content in, he would. You might say that the humanization of the gangsters represented some sort of content. [laughter] But essentially, what he would say is “Don't kid yourself.” That was the content of his position, “Don't kid yourself.” Well, this coincided with a theoretical position, [laughter] but it didn't come out of a theoretical position. It came out of his experience.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So there was probably no real end to the debate? I mean, the Communist Party in Hollywood just sort of came to an end and the debate with it in effect?

PAUL JARRICO

I would say so, yes. I think we were marked by the national cultural commission as incorrigible on this issue. [laughter] But it stopped having any

meaning. It was by that time--to use a word I hate to use as a pejorative--academic.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Well, you've told us what your screenwriting work was like in the period, say, '45 to '51. What sort of political work were you most involved in, in those years, prior to your subpoena?

PAUL JARRICO

I sort of forget. I was a very busy radical then. I was involved in so many organizations that I really forget what I concentrated on at that point. I would have to look at my files and see what I was doing.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Well, why don't we then go to **Salt of the Earth**, which you had said on the last tape became your main writing occupation after the subpoena, after you were in effect blacklisted.

PAUL JARRICO

Yeah. Well, I didn't write it, but I did produce it, and I was involved in its gestation. In the summer of 1950, I was on a holiday with my then wife [Sylvia Gussin Jarrico] and child [William Aaron Jarrico] at a sort of resort ranch north of Taos in New Mexico. We met Clint [Clinton] Jencks and his wife Virginia there. Clint Jencks was an organizer of the [International Union of] Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers assigned to work with Local 890 in Bayard, New Mexico, a largely Chicano local of the union. We got along well, we liked each other, we talked a lot about their activities in Bayard. We met them again the following summer at the same place, where we were again on holiday for a week or so, as they were. By the time we met the second time, the strike, which had started in the fall of 1950, was in full bloom. The women had in fact taken over the picket line, because the company had gotten an injunction that said that striking miners might not picket, and the women had said-- The strike seemed lost, and the women had said, “Well, the injunction doesn't say anything about the **wives** of the miners. We'll take over your picket line.” The men had been reluctant to, as they put it, hide behind women's skirts, but there was no alternative. The women had taken over, they had held the line

against police attacks, they had been arrested in droves. The men had found themselves at home, washing diapers, taking care of the kids. There was obviously a wonderful story there, and I and my wife and little boy went from northern New Mexico, where the Jenckses had been telling us this story, to-- We followed them to Bayard, New Mexico, where in fact all of this was happening. My wife walked the picket line, but I was not permitted to--they didn't want men in their line. It was just obvious to Sylvia, my then wife, and to me, that this was a terrific story. I had already, along with Adrian Scott and Herbert Biberman, formed a company [Independent Productions Corporation] to try to make films with content, using the talents of the blacklisted people. We had several scripts in the work. Dalton Trumbo was working on one-- Haven't I told you all this?

LARRY CEPLAIR

No.

PAUL JARRICO

Dalton Trumbo was working on one about a woman whose children were taken away from her by her husband in the course of a bitter divorce, because the husband was able to accuse her of being a communist. We had acquired the rights to a book about the Scottsboro boys, and a black writer named Mason Roberson had been-- We assigned him to develop that as a screenplay. And we had some other things that we were discussing as possible pictures. But when I came back from this vacation, I said to Adrian and to Herbert, “Eureka! I mean, this is a story that's got everything. It's got labor's rights, women's rights, minority rights, all in a dynamic package.” They agreed that it sounded like a wonderful basis for a movie. We persuaded Mike [Michael] Wilson--who was probably the best writer, certainly one of the two or three best writers, in our blacklisted ranks--to go there. He was also, coincidentally, my brother-in-law at that point. That is to say, we were married to sisters. We had worked together on various things. He went down to Bayard, New Mexico, and observed the women's picket line--the strike was still on--and dug into the personal stories, talked to a lot of people, and proceeded to write a treatment. He went back to Bayard with his treatment, which was criticized and discussed by the people there. The strike was over by that time. He then went into screenplay. We, meanwhile, Herbert and I, with some help from

Adrian, were raising money to produce the film. It was produced with a great deal of difficulty, because once it became known that people who had been ridden out of Hollywood on a blacklist were trying to make an independent film, there were just all kinds of obstacles put in our way. The laboratory that was developing our film refused, when there were public attacks on us, to do any more laboratory work for us. Other labs refused to take the work. Well, the story of the obstacles we faced has been told in various forms, including a documentary called A Crime to Fit the Punishment. At any rate, there was vigilante action against us, stirred up by a speech by a member of the Un-American Activities Committee, Donald Jackson, who attacked the film on the floor of Congress. His speech was replayed on the local radio again and again, and it was really incendiary. Vigilantes were formed there to try to stop us from shooting. Our star [Rosaura Revueltas], who had come up from Mexico City to play the leading role, was deported on a trumped-up charge. And so on. I mean, I could go on for an hour and a half about the problems making **Salt of the Earth**. It was finally completed, but only after--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Where did you get most of the money that you were able to raise? What were the sources?

PAUL JARRICO

We raised it in relatively small amounts, the largest-- We borrowed from various people who were sympathetic. We had a couple of $10,000 loans, a number of $5,000 loans, but most of our loans were in the $2,500 and $1,000 range. Our original budget was $100,000, with the writer, the director, and the producer working for nothing. That is to say, we took no fees. And by the time we finished the picture, because we had these obstacles to overcome, we had spent $200,000, rather than $100,000, and then we sank another $50,000 into trying to get the picture distributed. So the total cost was $250,000 dollars, which was cheap even then for a film. But we were never able to get that money back, because, though they did not succeed ultimately in stopping us from completing the film, they did succeed in stopping us from getting any real distribution of the film, at least in the United States. By the time we were able to get some money back from Europe, we sank that money into a long legal fight. We sued the industry, most of the industry, under the antitrust

laws for conspiring to stop the production and the distribution of the film. It dragged through the courts for ten years. It was finally heard in a ten-week trial, a jury trial. We lost. Many of the jury members said that they were sympathetic to us but that we had failed to prove conspiracy. That is to say, the individual studios and service organizations admitted that they had refused to provide services to us since we were reds, but they denied that they had done so in concert. We had to prove conspiracy if we were to win under the antitrust laws. We failed to prove conspiracy to the jury's satisfaction, at least as the judge had defined conspiracy, and we lost the case. We then, belatedly, began to get distribution in 16 millimeter. The picture became a cult favorite on campuses during the late sixties and early seventies, during that period of student rebellion. It's gone on since then not only to play all over the world and to win international prizes, and so on, but even to play on public television in the United States. It's been released on cassette. It's doing relatively well for a thirty-five-year-old black-and-white film, and it's now recognized by many people to be a classic. But it never it did make any money. Money would have allowed us to make other such pictures, pictures with “real content,” as we put it. So **Salt of the Earth**, was our only production, but we were very proud of it.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Were the producers financially ruined by it?

PAUL JARRICO

We were unable to pay back most of the loans. Many of them were written off as tax losses. When we lost the suit, which was our hope of pulling out, the corporations which had been formed to produce and distribute the film went out of business, and they assigned the rights to the film--that is to say to the negative of the film--to Herbert Biberman, who directed it; to Mike Wilson, who wrote it; and to me as the producer. So the three of us--and, by this time, our heirs, because both Mike and Herbert have died--own the picture. Some money still comes in. But if you're talking about us as individuals, yes, Herbert ran out of the funds that he had accumulated, and he came from a relatively wealthy family. Mike didn't suffer as much. He was able-- I mean, his investment of time was less than Herbert's. Herbert put five years of his life into the picture, I put three years of my life into it. Mike only had to put a year

or so into it. [laughter] Mike was able in time to get some very important black market work. He would have gotten a credit on **The Bridge on the River Kwai**, and in fact ultimately, posthumously, was awarded an Oscar for **Bridge on the River Kwai**. He would have gotten a credit on **Lawrence of Arabia**, and in fact the British Writers Guild awarded him coequal credit. But the blacklist prevented his getting screen credit on either of those two hugely successful films. At any rate, it was well known in the industry that he had written these blockbusters, and he was able to get quite a bit of work, black market work, afterwards. I too got some. I managed, at least, to support myself and my family. Or families, I should say, because I divorced and married another wife [Yvette Le Floc'h Jarrico]. Anyway, I was able to survive.

1.8. TAPE NUMBER: IV, SIDE TWO

MARCH 14, 1990

LARRY CEPLAIR

Well, how much black market work did you do, and how did it come to you?

PAUL JARRICO

The black market went through different stages. At first, it was really so far under the table that it was under the floor. I mean by that that if a producer discovered he'd bought something by a blacklisted writer, sold to him under another name or through a front, the chances were very real that the deal would be broken. In fact, that happened to me, where I and another blacklisted writer sold a script, and the buyer discovered that the front was a front and the deal was broken. That was the earliest stage. That was the early fifties, or for the Ten, the Hollywood Ten, the late forties. But by the mid-fifties, by the time I really began to depend on the black market, producers were beginning to look the other way. I'd say by the late fifties, they were even courting blacklisted writers, still insisting, though, that they work under phony names or through fronts. It was very complicated. There were as many stories as there were black market deals. [laughter] I mean, it took different forms. Mike Wilson was able to slip through the sieve and get to Europe during the mid-fifties. You know, of course,that one of the ironies of the blacklist was that our passports were taken away at the same time we were blacklisted. I had been to Europe in '46, '47, and '48, and again in '51, and had

contacts there and could have worked there, or felt I could, if I could get there, but I couldn't. Mike Wilson managed because his passport was under a different combination of-- He was Michael Franklin Wilson in the industry, and he was Franklin Michael Wilson on his birth certificate. Somehow, Wilson being a very common name, he managed to slip through. So these big jobs that I mentioned on **Bridge on the River Kwai** and **Lawrence of Arabia** were partly his by virtue of the fact that he was able to get to Europe, where the work for a blacklistee was more plentiful. The Supreme Court ruled in the fall of '58 that the State Department did not have a right to withhold passports on political grounds in the [Rockwell] Kent and [Walter] Briehl cases [combined into **Kent v. Dulles**] won by Leonard Boudin. The floodgates opened, so to speak. That is to say, or many of us who had been champing at the bit were able then to go, though by this time it was less necessary, since it was easier by then to get black market work in the United States. But I went anyway, having built up this head of steam, this desire to go, and I managed to get some good assignments. I worked under a phony name on a picture that J. Arthur Rank made in England. I worked under a phony name, though with the knowledge of the producer, on a Dino De Laurentiis picture in Italy. I worked on a film in Germany. I was able to-- I wouldn't say I got a lot of work, but I got enough work to be able, as I said, to survive, to support my families.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was it congenial work? I mean, were the types of scripts you had on the black market the sorts of things that you liked working on, or would you just work?

PAUL JARRICO

Both, both. I would take work because it was work, and unless it had a reactionary content I wouldn't mind that. It was just bread-and-butter work. But once in a while, I would get an assignment, or promote an assignment, on something that I really enjoyed working on. One of my projects in the seventies was a quite complete rewrite of a script, **Assassination at Sarajevo**. It was a Yugoslav-Czech coproduction. They wanted some international stars, and they approached a man with whom I had worked before named Oliver Unger, who was in a position to get stars for them. He was a wheeler-dealer producer. He said he would do it, he would join the project, only on the condition that his writer rewrote the script, and he brought me in to do that.

The picture was made in English, but the director, a Yugoslav, knew no English. His claim to the job was that his wife was the niece of [Josip] Tito's wife, but he was otherwise unqualified to handle this film. Oliver Unger wanted me to work with the director during the shooting, to help with the language and to protect my work, which Unger liked. But the Czechs wouldn't let me into Czechoslovakia. Unger wanted to know why, but they gave no reason. He kept fighting for it, insisting that I was needed, and he went up the ladder of political authority until he reached somebody who could explain why I was being barred. The explanation he got finally was that I was associated with enemies of the regime. It was true. I had been in Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring, in '68, and I'd become very friendly with some key activists of the Prague Srping. And I remained friendly with them after the Russian tanks moved in and they went into exile. So I'm probably the only screenwriter in the world who's been blacklisted on both sides of the Iron Curtain. [laughter] A mark of honor for me.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was part of the reason you were objectionable your friendship with Ota Katz?

PAUL JARRICO

No, no. That's another story, which I doubt--But no, in terms of chronology, that was far, far earlier. The story I've been telling about the Sarajevo film was is in the mid-seventies and was a result of the Prague Spring in '68. The story of Ota Katz ended in '51 when he was executed as part of the [Rudolph] Slansky gang of counterrevolutionaries, though I knew him to be a very loyal international communist and couldn't believe the charges against him, that he was a tool of the imperialists trying to overthrow the socialist regime. That's a complicated story, and again, I don't know how much time you want me to take with these anecdotes.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Well, I think he's an interesting figure, and you probably know as much about him as anyone, so why don't you tell us a little bit about who he was and your sort of contacts with him on and off.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, Ota Katz was a Czech writer and organizer who had worked in Germany before Hitler came to power and continued to work with the German underground after Hitler came to power. He had come to Hollywood in the mid-thirties, in '36 or so, to raise money for the German underground and was really very successful in getting some important people, including, as I recall, Jack Warner, to make some large donations. He had met some left-wing Hollywood people involved in the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League at that time. The play**Watch on the Rhine** that Lillian Hellman wrote about a German refugee in the United States who goes back into Germany to fight Hitlerism was inspired by her having met and worked with this man. He was a dynamic fellow and a personable fellow. I met him in '43 in Mexico. Sylvia and I, my then wife and I, were on a holiday in Mexico, because I was about to ship out in the merchant marine, and this was sort of a last holiday together before I left. We saw in a newspaper that André Simon was lecturing at at a workers school. We had never met him, but we knew about him. That was the name Ota Katz used when he had written a book called **J'Accuse: The Men Who Betrayed France**. And it was also his pseudonym when he had been active as a propagandist for the Loyalists during the Spanish Civil War. So we went to this rather sad-looking workers school where he was lecturing to a rather small and sad-looking group of people. And in broken Spanish-- I had no Spanish at all, but I recognized the vocabulary. It was the vocabulary of-- I mean, words like "imperialism" are pretty much the same [laughter] in most languages. When he finished his lecture he said, "Any questions?" And nobody raised his hand. But he turned to Sylvia, who had been watching him with wide-eyed attention, and said, "Surely you have a question." And she said, in broken Spanish, "I don't speak Spanish." [laughter] So he gave up. His lecture was not very successful, clearly. We approached him and invited him out for a drink, and he began to understand that we were from Hollywood, that we had many friends in common, and that we were, in fact, fellow leftists. I told some funny stories about the writing of **Song of Russia** and how Louis B. Mayer had wanted the farm on which the heroine's parents worked to be a privately owned farm instead of a collective farm. I've told you those stories. And other such things. He laughed, and we became-- There was obviously a rapport between us, and he felt at home with us. After a while he sighed, and he said, "It's a funny thing. In Germany, we said, 'Follow us, we'll show you how to defeat fascism.' And a lot of people did follow us, and we lost," he said. "Then

we go to Spain and we say, ‘Follow us. We're experienced in the fight against fascism, and we'll show you how to defeat fascism.’ A lot of people do follow us, and we lose. Then we go to France and we say, ‘Follow us, we're really experienced in the fight against fascism.’ And people do follow us, and we lose.” He signed again, and he said, “Now here I am in Mexico,” and he made a gesture of rolling up his sleeves and threw up his hands. “Follow us!” [laughter] So about five years later, I'm in Italy and I'm trying to promote a coproduction of a script I've written. I've acquired the rights to a book called **Temptation** by an expatriate Hungarian writer who called himself John Pen, but whose name was [Janos] Szekely. It was a story about a fifteen-year-old boy between the First and Second World Wars who lives in the most abject poverty imaginable in Budapest and who works as a bellboy in the most luxurious hotel in Budapest. The basic theme was that in a society such as that, one had to choose between being a revolutionary and a scoundrel. It was a good book. I liked it very much, and I acquired the rights. This was, incidentally, before I was blacklisted. [laughter] It was part of my own hope to do pictures with content, but in this case outside of Hollywood. I was trying to get into Czechoslovakia and having trouble getting a visa. I'd been to London trying to promote the thing, I'd been to Paris, then I'd gone to Rome, and my hope was to go to Prague and to Budapest, but I was having trouble getting visas. By that time, André Simon, or Ota Katz, was foreign editor of **Rudé Pravo**, which was the communist newspaper of Czechoslovakia, and by that time, the summer of '48, the communists had taken over in Czechoslovakia. So I sent him a telegram asking for his help in getting me into Czechoslovakia, and immediately I got the visa I wanted. I went to visit him on the ninth floor of this massive building. He had this big office that seemed to rival Louis B. Mayer's office. [laughter] And a picture of Lenin on one wall, and [Klement] Gottwald on another wall. He received me very, very warmly indeed, and he wanted to know all about the Hollywood Ten, because this is '48, and in '47 the Hollywood Ten had gotten themselves in trouble. He knew several of them, because he had met them years before in Hollywood. He asked about them, and I told him as best I could. He asked me if I would write about it for his paper. I did in fact write an article about the Hollywood Ten for his paper, subsequently. But in that conversation, he said, “It's really a remarkable thing.” He said, “The Nazis started in the same way. They started with an attack on the movie industry, on the film industry, on UFA [Universum Film

Aktien Gesellschaft].” And I said, “There's just one difference.” He said, “What is that?” And I said, “We're not going to lose.” He looked at me for a moment. He turned in his swivel chair and looked out the window at the beautiful city of Prague. He turned back to me, and he said, “We didn't lose.” [laughter] Well, three years after that, he was executed as an imperialist agent, so--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Wasn't that a shock to you? I mean, that must have been the most shocking thing that happened within the party at that point.

PAUL JARRICO

It was certainly the-- There were other such developments, but it was the one that shocked me personally the most because I knew the man and knew that it was just utter nonsense to accuse this man who had-- I mean, he had spent his life fighting for the communist cause, and effectively, too.

LARRY CEPLAIR

So all those sort of purge trials that were occurring in Eastern Europe, in Hungary, and in Czechoslovakia, you must have just seen those as-- Well, how did you see them? What did you think was going on there?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, the first one, which was in Hungary, if I'm not mistaken, the [Laszlo] Rajk trial, in which Rajk was accused of being a Titoist, I more or less bought. But by the time the Slansky trial came along in Czechoslovakia, I didn't buy it at all. Again, I don't want to claim prescience, and I don't want to claim to have been too far ahead of my particular circle in feeling that there was something radically wrong, basically wrong, terribly wrong, that was happening. But I would say in '51 I really began to feel that, and-- But I didn't quit, I didn't quit the party because of that.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Let's go back to Hollywood, then, and you can tell us sort of what was going on with you and with the party in Hollywood from your blacklisting to when you finally ended up leaving Hollywood.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, the party was essentially falling apart. Its chief activity after '51, after the spring of '51, was to defend people against the committee. I mean, it was hard to find the time or energy to be involved in anything except this self-defense. We put up a pretty good fight trying to get publicity for our point of view, attacking the committee and its intentions, and so on. But it was a losing fight, clearly a losing fight. So the party, in effect, was falling apart. That is to say, people were quitting. Even good people. I mean, not counting the ones who were turning and becoming informers and so on, but even good people. They were scattering, they were leaving town, they were certainly leaving activity. So the ranks of the party were definitely dwindling. I remained one of the leaders, trying to hold the party together, trying to encourage people to stay, though, as I have already indicated, most of my own focus, after I appeared early in '51, was on trying to get these independent productions off the ground. Within the party, granting this general picture of dwindling forces, I was still in conflict with John Howard Lawson, who wanted, understandably, to regain the leadership he had more or less naturally assumed before he went to jail. Some of us who had perforce emerged as the leaders during his absence didn't want to give the leadership back to him because we disagreed with him about the line. Now, I've already touched on these basic disagreements. But I'll give you an example of it. We put out a leaflet saying-- More than a leaflet, a sort of--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Brochure?

PAUL JARRICO

Not quite a brochure, a--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Pamphlet?

PAUL JARRICO

[laughter] A two-page folded thing saying, “These are pictures that were written by people who are now being blacklisted.” It was a list of about a hundred pictures, and they were good pictures, they were well-known pictures. They included pictures like, for instance, **Tom, Dick and Harry**, which

I had written. I mean, if you add up the list of credits of all the blacklisted people, you get quite an impressive list. If you're selective and you don't put in all the B pictures, just the better pictures and the better-known writers, you can say, “These are the talents whose work you're being denied. You, the audience.” That was the thrust of the-- We'll call it a brochure. Lawson said, “You call **Tom, Dick and Harry** a progressive picture?” And other pictures like that that we had listed. Well, [laughter] here you have the leftism versus rightism within the party illustrated. We said, “Yes. In terms of this fight, yes. It's good for people to know that the people who are being blacklisted wrote a lot of pictures that they liked. It doesn't matter whether you think that they were progressive or not as pictures.” So I wouldn't say these were knock-down-drag-out fights. They were just differences in line, and some of us refused to give the leadership back to Lawson. But these fights within the party were, in a sense, meaningless, because the context was we were in full retreat. When '56 came along and [NikitaJ Khrushchev's report became known, in which he detailed some of Stalin's crimes, and it became clear that we had been, as I've put it, defending indefensible things, that Stalin was in fact a mass murderer, well, the bottom just fell out of the party at that point. Some of us stayed in and tried to fight for a declaration of independence against the Soviet leadership, the same sort of thing in a small way that was going on in Hungary and other places. We seemed to have won. We thought we had won when a national convention of the party in '57 passed resolutions asserting our independence from the Soviet line. But then early in '58, Foster, William [Z.] Foster, declared the decisions of the '57 invalid and seized the leadership and the line again. Those of us who were still left fighting, or most of us who were still in there fighting against that kind of procedure, not to say that kind of position, quit. That's when I quit, early in '58. It was a coincidence that we won our right to passports late in '58, and I took off, though those two things were not connected. I quit the party early in '58. Most people quit earlier. They quit in '56 or '57. But I was [laughter] a diehard, a stalwart--

LARRY CEPLAIR

How many Hollywood communists were there at the time of your quitting?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I can't answer that directly, not because I don't want to, but because I left Hollywood in '57. We pulled up stakes in '57 and moved to New York for a year. So I don't know what was going on in Hollywood. By the time I left, in the summer of '57, I would say there were--I don't know, ten would be an exaggeration. I'm sure there were fewer than that by--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you think something had gone out of your life when you stopped being a communist? I mean, after all, this was twenty years of pretty devoted effort to a cause.

PAUL JARRICO

Well, my life was changing so radically in any event, because, one, we pulled up stakes here when my son graduated from high school and went off to college. So that switch to New York was a basic change, though I remained politically active in New York. Then the following year, this moving to Europe was an even bigger change. So it's all connected as a period of great change for me. But, yes, there were certain habits of political activity that were developed during those years that I did miss. I remained active from time to time in various political campaigns, so that my political training wasn't entirely wasted. [laughter] I still consider myself an activist of sorts. I'm a member of the Democratic Socialists of America. I'm not very active, but they do represent essentially my position. I still get involved from time to time in some sort of campaign.

LARRY CEPLAIR

How long did you live in Paris?

PAUL JARRICO

I was in Europe most of twenty years. Not always in Paris. Paris was sort of the base. But I lived four years in England at one point, one year at another point; two years in Switzerland at different points (I mean two separate years); more than a year in the south of France, a year and a half, perhaps, if one put two different periods together. I kept coming back to Paris. I would say that from '58 to '77, I was resident one place or another in Europe, usually Paris.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Was it hard to be a writer in exile for you?

PAUL JARRICO

No. No. Not in the conventional sense of missing my roots or missing my language, because I was working basically on films in English meant for the international market, very often financed by American companies: international films with international financing. Almost all of my work-- I worked on a couple of films that were made in France in French, but even there I worked in English. The woman I married in France was French and was a very good bridge for me, but I never mastered French well enough to really function in it as a writer and never tried to.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Can you tell me some of the films you wrote while you were abroad?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes. I've mentioned one; it was called **Assassination at Sarajevo** in Europe. In the United States, where it had very little distribution, it was called **The Day that Shook the World**. It starred Christopher Plummer, Maximilian Schell, and Florinda Bolkan; it was directed by a man named [Velko] Bulajic. Mike Wilson and I wrote a film called **Five Branded Women**for De Laurentiis. It was--Oh, the Sarajevo picture came after I was able to use my own name. I mean, my name is on the Sarajevo film. The one for De Laurentiis that Mike and I wrote, the screenplay credit went to somebody named Ivo Parelli. Who that is I don't know. But the producer knew he was hiring Mike Wilson and Paul Jarrico, and we did write it. It was directed by Marty Ritt, Martin Ritt. It was about Yugoslav partisans, about some women who were punished for their relationships with Italian soldiers, for being collaborationists during the war, who became bandits as a way of trying to live, trying to survive. Their heads had been shaved and so on by the partisans. But then the partisans found that they needed the help of these women, and it was about the relationships that developed. In both of these cases, I was disappointed in the results.
But nevertheless, they were honorable in intention. I worked on a picture--under a phony name--called **All Night Long**, produced by J. Arthur Rank, which was **Othello** in a contemporary jazz milieu. It was not bad, but not really good, not really the film that I wanted it to be. I worked on a number of others.

Those were the main ones, I guess, the larger ones. Well, I worked on one called **The Day the Hot Line Got Hot**, with Robert Taylor and Charles Boyer, which was made in Spain as a French-American-Spanish-Italian coproduction, a comedy. That was released in '68, and that was the first feature film that my name was on since **The White Tower** in '51. So there was a seventeen-year gap.

LARRY CEPLAIR

That's ironic, isn't it, Robert Taylor? Because he was in **Song of Russia**, wasn't he?

PAUL JARRICO

Right. [laughter]

LARRY CEPLAIR

And didn't he sort of tell the committee how embarrassed he was about all that?

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, he said he had been forced to do this “red” picture. But I don't think-- I didn't meet him when he was shooting this later one. He may or may not have recognized that the same writer had written it. My name was on the script, so I guess he did, but I never had the opportunity to discuss it with him. He died soon thereafter. It was his final picture.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What about living in Europe? Did you associate mostly with Americans, or were you part of sort of the European cultural milieu?

PAUL JARRICO

I'm afraid that the exiled people, though we didn't use the word “exile,” tended to hang out with each other quite a bit. In that sense, I guess we were homesick. And I never succeeded in really feeling integrated into French society. I'd felt more integrated when I was in England, and strangely enough, in Czechoslovakia, partly because my wife, though she was French, had spent twelve years in Czechoslovakia, knew the language very well, well enough to be a cultural and political journalist on Czech journals. Her circle of

acquaintances there was wide and interesting, and I got to know more Czech people in the relatively short time I spent there--three months in '67 and about five months in '68--probably than I ever got to know in Paris, French people in Paris. It was partly a matter of culture, too. I don't know. But no, I would say that basically my best friends tended to be people I had known in the United States.

LARRY CEPLAIR

When the blacklist lifted and you could put your name back on movies, why did you not return, say, in the late sixties? Why did you stay on?

PAUL JARRICO

That's a bit complicated and a good question. I did come back briefly in the fall of '64, because the **Salt of the Earth** case finally came to trial. While I was in the United States, I got a job, though under a phony name, but with the producers well aware of my identity, writing a TV show called “The Defenders,” which was quite a prestigious show. I then got a job doing some television work in Canada. But my then wife, the one that I just described as having lived in Czechoslovakia for so many years, was barred from the United States. She had come with me for the trial, and at that time we decided that we would settle in the United States and we took an apartment in New York. She went back to France to collect her child [Armelle Aymonin], a daughter of an earlier marriage, who was by that time my stepchild, and we had enrolled her in a French lycée in New York. But they wouldn't let Yvette, my then wife, back into the United States. They denied her visa in Paris. When she said, “But you let me in before,” they said, “If we knew then what we know now, we wouldn't have let you in in the first place.” She was barred under that section of the McCarran Act which bars not simply people who've been communists, but a special category of people described as communist propagandists. Since she had worked under her own name on these Czech journals and they were subsidized by the Czech government, she was by definition a Czech propagandist, or by American State Department definition, and she was barred. Though we put up a fight against it and got lawyers, and I even went down to Washington and tried to get a congressman to put in a special bill to get her in, we failed to. I failed to, and therefore I moved back to Europe. So the intention in '65 was that I would take advantage of the fact that the

blacklist was essentially over for a lot of people and that I probably could begin to get work under my own name. But it got thwarted by this political development in which my wife got barred from the States, and I therefore went back to Europe.

1.9. TAPE NUMBER: V, SIDE ONE

MARCH 14, 1990

LARRY CEPLAIR

When you came back, I guess in the late seventies, was it difficult for you to resume a writing career in Hollywood?

PAUL JARRICO

It was fairly difficult. Most of my credits were very old by that time. I mean my Hollywood credits. Also, a number of the people that I had known were out of the business. There was a whole flock of new executives, new producers, that I didn't know at all and who didn't really know me at all. So, yes, I had some trouble solving the reentry problem, as I called it. But I began to get some fairly unimportant television jobs, and they were-- There weren't a lot of them, but there were enough to encourage me to keep trying. Sort of slowly I felt that I was reestablishing myself. I more or less expected that. I didn't expect to just walk in and resume a career that I had had so many years earlier. But I was able, finally, to get some more important television work, executive story editor on a couple of network series, one called “Call to Glory,” another called “Fortune Dane.” The first one was fairly successful, the second one not very successful. More recently, in '88, I got a sole screenplay credit on a Charles Bronson film called **Messenger of Death**. I wasn't particularly proud of it, though the fact that I had a sole screenplay credit meant to a lot of people that I was still alive, [laughter] and that was useful. In fact, despite the title-- Bronson had made a series of pictures,**Death Wish** I, II, III, and IV, and the body count was enormous. I mean, he generally managed to kill at least twenty people per picture. In my script he didn't kill anybody. He played a newspaperman who solved a murder mystery. There were killings, but they weren't killings by Bronson. The newspaper critics, at least the **New York Times**, the **L.A. Times**, the **Daily Variety**, weekly **Variety**, picked up on the fact

that this was a change of pace for Bronson and that I had written this screenplay, [laughter] so I guess the fight for content--

LARRY CEPLAIR

Goes on? [laughter]

PAUL JARRICO

Goes on, right. I have worked on several pictures that were not made, or have not been made yet, and I have several things cooking at the moment that look very promising. Interestingly enough, a script that my French wife [Yvette Le Floc'h Jarrico], who had lived in Czechoslovakia so long, and I wrote after the Prague Spring, after the Russian tanks rolled in, called**Big Brother**, which is a very political picture about [Alexander] Dubcek and [Leonid] Brezhnev and their relationship, with a lot of satiric political songs in the script, is now very, veryhot in Prague. There's a very real possibility that it's going to be made. A very good Czech director named Ivan Passer wants to do it. He's been in exile from Czechoslovakia for the past twenty years and has made quite a reputation for himself. So that really is out of left field and a direct result of the fantastic changes that have been taking place in Eastern Europe in the past year.

LARRY CEPLAIR

As far as one can be called an employed screenwriter in today's Hollywood, you are an employed Hollywood screenwriter.

PAUL JARRICO

Yes, yes, I'm a working writer.

LARRY CEPLAIR

You're doing some teaching too, are you not?

PAUL JARRICO

I did some. I'm not at the moment. I wrote a play called **Leonardo** about Leonardo da Vinci. It was really an adaptation of a screenplay I had done many years ago in Europe that had never been produced. The play was produced at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and as a result I had a job there as a regents lecturer, which was sort of a sinecure, a way to subsidize my being

up there while the play was being prepared. That led to an offer to teach a film course during a summer a few years back. And that led to my being a visiting professor on a couple of film courses--one in screenwriting and one on film and social reality--during a regular academic quarter. The door is presumably open for me to do some more teaching. I found it interesting. I found it more difficult than I expected. But I'm happy to have that possibility and-- But I think of it more or less as a fallback position and would much rather work as a screenwriter, and hopefully sometime as a producer.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Do you feel that you were deprived of a large part of your creative life by the blacklist? Were you or are you angry about that?

PAUL JARRICO

There's no question about my having been deprived of the opportunity to do a lot of movies in Hollywood. Since I was on what I've called the “escalator”-- And when I look at people who started as screenwriters about the time that I did and had more or less similar careers before the blacklist and look at what happened to the careers of those who were not blacklisted, I can't help but feel that my career would have continued to rise, not only in economic terms, but in terms of the opportunities to write some fairly important films. So in that sense I can say, well, yes, I was deprived of a Hollywood career. On the other hand, I was really a pretty political animal, as you've gathered, and I was already, as I've indicated, beginning to think of how to make pictures outside of Hollywood, independent films. Hence that effort to do **Temptation** back in '48, which was more than three years before I was blacklisted. And I would not have produced **Salt of the Earth**, which I think is the only picture I ever worked on that got better over the years instead of worse. I would not have had some extremely rich experiences in Europe, including being in Czechoslovakia from February to July of '68, an enormously interesting period called the Prague Spring. I really wouldn't trade the experiences I did have for the Hollywood career I didn't have. So, no, I'm not angry, [laughter] I'm not bitter. Once in a while I regret not being in a firmer position in Hollywood, because I am still trying to regain-- I'm just about back now, in terms of professional status, at the point that I was at in '51, and here we are in '90, so I sort of regret that, yes.

LARRY CEPLAIR

As long as we've touched back on **Salt of the Earth**, I have a couple of questions left over from that. What was the reaction of the Hollywood communists to the movie?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, they were enthusiastic, by and large, because they felt we were fighting back for all of them. It was the only counterattack. I mean, here the Hollywood left was, totally on the defensive, and here we are asserting our right to make a film and actually making a film and actually succeeding despite enormous obstacles in completing a film. Sure, they were-- I mean, the first showing we had was for the blacklistees, and they were high as hell, not so much because they thought the film was so wonderful, but just because it was made. I remember one good friend of mine, Shimen Ruskin, an actor who played roles like the neighborhood candy-store owner who would say to John Garfield, "We're all behind you. Everybody in the neighborhood is behind you," when he was going into a prizefight. I mean, that sort of role. A charming, lovely man, who came out of the Jewish theater. As we left this showing, this first showing of **Salt of the Earth**, he took my arm and said, "Paul, it's a great picture. It's a great picture! Too bad it isn't good." [laughter] But a lot of people even thought it was good. You asked earlier about my own feeling about the film. For many years I could only see the defects. But lately when I do see the kind of audience reaction it still gets thirty-five years later, I really am very proud of it. I think the difficulties we had are reflected in certain technical crudities. I don't think the direction is as good as it should be. I think the performances of some of the amateur actors are so clearly amateur that they're somewhat embarrassing, though the leading performances are very good. I think probably the content is a little too much on the nose, that the social conflicts are presented perhaps in terms that are too black and white and not gray enough, not ambiguous enough, not ambivalentenough. On the other hand, when I see some of the freewheeling films that have been hailed over the past twenty-five or thirty years as great artistic breakthroughs but whose meaning is very hard to discern, I'm very pleased about the fact that **Salt of the Earth** is so very crystal clear about what it's trying to say. At least its themes are evident, instead of being just so murky that one can't tell what the film is about.

LARRY CEPLAIR

What was the reaction of the national party to the film?

PAUL JARRICO

They were enthusiastic about it. We had difficulties with the party in making the film, but they were-- We really did not have the full support of the party in making the film. But when the film was made, they were enthusiastic about it. I'll give you an example. We couldn't get a crew. Roy Brewer, the head of the IATSE [International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees], said he'd see us in hell before he'd let us have an IATSE crew. We at one point had a Mexican crew assembled by a wonderful cameraman, [Gabriel] Figueroa, who wanted to come and help us make the film, and they couldn't get visas. We finally managed to get a union of television and documentary workers in New York to agree to supply a crew. That union was trying to get into the IATSE--that is, trying to get its members accepted into the IATSE. The party there decided that it was more important for them to get into the IATSE than to provide a crew for **Salt of the Earth**. We were furious. I still am. [laughter] John Howard Lawson--not to make this oral history sound like some sort of feud between me and John Howard Lawson--was very critical of the picture while it was being made. I have in my files a long, long analysis that he wrote in which he complained first about the script, then about the film as it was developing, before it was totally finished. Later, in his books and publicly, he paid it great honor, he spoke of it very highly. But during the actual making of the film, he was just another obstacle, and we finally just disregarded his criticisms. There were other things that happened that made us feel that though we were loyal party people, we were making this film without the party, or despite the party, or the party was irrelevant to the making of the film. On the other hand, when we finished the film, when we opened the film in New York, we arranged for a private showing for the leadership of the party, and they were enthusiastic about it. We also arranged for a private showing--though this was on an entirely different basis--for representatives of the East European countries at the United Nations. They were led by [Andrei] Vyshinsky, who was the head of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations. I should explain that we couldn't get a theater in the Times Square area, so the picture opened on Eighty-sixth Street at a third-run film house. That's where we had our world premiere of the picture. And it was very successful. That is to say, it ran for ten weeks and

it had big, enthusiastic crowds and relatively good reviews, even in **Time** magazine and the **New York Times**. We began to feel that we were going to break through on distribution, but the major studios said to the exhibitors who did want to play the film, “If you play that film, you'll never get another Paramount [Pictures, Inc.] film; you'll never get another MGM [Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.] film.” One by one the exhibitors backed out. That was one of the bases for our suit, for our antitrust suit. But I was telling another story. The delegations representing Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, etc., to the United Nations were confined to a certain area of New York. They were not allowed to go north of-- I think it was Fifty-seventh Street. Or south of-- I think it was, Fourteenth Street. They wanted to see the picture, and we wanted them to see the picture, not simply for political reasons. We wanted to sell the picture to these countries. So we arranged for a private showing at the very large and impressive home of the Soviet delegation on Park Avenue, where Vyshinsky invited representatives from all the other countries to come to this screening. It was run on two navy projection machines. I mean, secondhand navy projection machines. There was a big ballroom full of party chairs. I don't mean Communist Party chairs--I mean ballroom chairs. There were several hundred people there, and there was a buzz, buzz, buzz all during the showing of people translating for others. Those who knew English-- It wasn't subtitled. Those who knew English were translating for those who didn't know English. The projectionist was a Russian, and I kept trying to communicate to him that I wanted the sound to be higher, whereupon he would put it lower, or I wanted it to be lower, and he would put it higher. We would come to places in the picture that always got a laugh, always, like the women pulling the distributor cap off the car that's trying to run through their picket line, and there was just this continued buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz. I was sinking through the floor in embarrassment and consternation. A disaster. When it was over, there was a long silence and then acclamation, a loud standing ovation, and just-- It went on and on. I was there, Will Geer was there, Sol Kaplan, who wrote the music. Herbert Biberman wasn't there, because he was in Chicago trying to break through the boycott against the showing of the film in Chicago. Vyshinsky, who had prosecuted the so-called traitors during the thirties, pumped my hand and said, beaming, “A billion people will see this film. You will make a lot of money.” [laughter] He was right about the billion people, because it played in China for fifteen years.

It was the only American picture playing in China during those years. But he was wrong about the money. When I was in the Soviet Union for the first and only time in 1959, for their first international film festival-- They had paid us very little money. We had asked for $100,000, and they said $20,000. We said $80,000; they said $20,000. We said $60,000; they said $20,000. We said $40,000; they said $20,000. And finally we sold it to them for $20,000. The vice minister of culture said, “Ah, **Salt of the Earth**. We have translated it into every one of our languages. It's loved all over the Soviet Union. When people ask me, ‘What is the meaning of socialist realism?’ I say, ‘See **Salt of the Earth**.’” He said, “Tell me, how did the picture do?” I said, “We lost our shirt.” He said, “What do you mean?” I said, “It was a financial disaster.” He said, “How is that possible?” I said, “We were boycotted in the West and cheated in the East.” And he grew white and he said, “That's not my department!” And he walked away.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Did you ever get any money from the People's Republic?

PAUL JARRICO

From China? No. But that was in a sense not their fault. We went through exactly the same charade of negotiating with them. We asked for $100,000, they said $20,000, and finally we came down to $20,000. When we made the deal, our government, the United States government, stepped in and said, “That's trading with the enemy. You can't sell to China.” So we said to the Chinese, “We're terribly sorry. We want to sell this picture to you, but our government forbids it.” So they appropriated the film. Many years later, when [Richard M.] Nixon opened the door to China, I tried very hard to get them to pay the $20,000, but I was never able to meet the people whose department it was.

LARRY CEPLAIR

[laughter] Well, as you look at the events that are occurring in Central and Eastern Europe these days, what is your feeling?

PAUL JARRICO

Well, I'm exhilarated by the notion that Stalinism and neo-Stalinism have been defeated, that there's a recognition that you cannot call a tyrannical command system socialism, that that's not what socialism really means. Socialism has to be democratic if it's to be socialism, and therefore the rapidity with which the various countries that call themselves socialist have been throwing out their dictatorial leaderships and opting for democratic forms of government, that has been very exhilarating. On the other hand, like a lot of other people, I'm very nervous about what's going to happen in these countries, because it seems to me that in their eagerness for the advantages of a free-enterprise system, of a recognition that self-interest is a useful motor to get things produced and get things done, that they might forget that social justice is still the basic aim of a socialist government, or should be. And if they embrace the evils of capitalism as well as the advantages of genuinely free enterprise, then they're going to be in terrible trouble. So I have a trepidation, which I think is not mine alone, but fairly widespread. At this point, though, the trepidation is nowhere near the weight of the exhilaration. I'm just very happy about what's happening, particularly in Czechoslovakia, which is the East European country I know best and where I think the transition is in the best hands.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Do you think Marxism has been compromised ineradicably as a mobilizing ideology for the left?

PAUL JARRICO

I think that Marx and Engels and Lenin are dead, but that their contributions to the social sciences are not at all dead and will be increasingly important, not decreasingly important. I think insofar as socialism and tyranny have been made synonymous by really very inept and corrupt bureaucrats that Marxism has been perverted and given a very bad reputation. But I think when people begin to see that Marxism means individual liberty as well as social justice and that the evils of capitalism that Marx and Engels analyzed are still very much with us--and in fact intensified by the development of capitalism since--and that capitalism too has failed, not just so-called “socialism”-- We really have to build a different-- Not some combination of, but a different-- We have to find a way of harnessing the motor of self-interest to social ends, and we haven't found it. In that sense, it's a wonderfully exciting time to be alive, because

whole new ways of thinking, whole new mechanisms, have to be developed. I think there are a lot of people who recognize that, and some of them are in power, at least in Czechoslovakia. [laughter] I may be kidding myself about that, too, but I don't think so.

LARRY CEPLAIR

Thank you, Paul.

PAUL JARRICO

Okay.

Appendix A Appendix

STATEMENT of PAUL JARRICO,

written for his testimony before the

House Committee on Un-American Activities,

April 13, 1951

(He was not permitted to read it before HUAC, although it was placed in the record.)

My father was a Russian Jew, a poet and a fighting man. At the age of seventeen he organized an armed self-defense corps, to protect the Jews of his hometown, Kharkov, against a massacre. In other cities of Imperial Russia these massacres occurred--pogroms they were called. In Kharkov, where the intended victims organized, there was no pogrom.

Thrown into a Czarist prison, he managed to escape to America. Like millions of other immigrants, he never ceased to marvel at the miracle he discovered here. Freedom! To him it was no abstraction, but a matter of life and death. Imagine--a land in which one could advocate whatever one believed. Advocate it, agitate for it, organize for it, and someday gain a majority for it. Any change whatsoever. Not a perfect country, but an infinitely perfectible one--because it was free.

My father became a lawyer, a defender of the poor, what the cynics call a do-gooder. He taught me to love this country, really to love it, not with the demonstrative hypocrisy of a professional patriot but with a profound concern for its people and its future.

Today freedom and America are no longer synonymous. The miracle of being able to think freely, speak freely, write freely, meet freely--no more. Do so and you lose your job. Do so and you're smeared as subversive. Do so and you go to jail. The miracle has become a mirage. You look around today and you see Americans afraid to open their mouths. Or opening them only to purge themselves, only to perjure themselves, only to inform on their friends. Consider it. In the land of the free, the home of the brave.

Why? Because we are threatened by communism, we are told. To protect our liberties we must give up our liberties. To preserve morality we must abandon morality. To prevent war we must prepare for war. To stop aggression we must embark on aggression. What fantastic nonsense.

What is communism? Are we allowed to discuss it? Is it a militant form of socialism? Does it require war, by its very nature? Is it the opposite of freedom? Are we allowed to debate it? What is capitalism? Was it once progressive? Is it now decadent? Does it need a war economy in order to survive? Are we allowed to say so?

No, for it is not our loyalty to our country that is being judged, but our loyalty to the particular economic system that prevails here. And that is the biggest lie of all: that capitalism and democracy are somehow the same thing, that it's un-American to stand for social change.

Under the guise of fighting communism, Hitler plunged the world into a bloody war. With the same rationalization we have now intervened in a civil war 6,000 miles from our shores, and responsible American leaders are still proposing that we extend this war, that we attack China now. Your willingness to see the people of the world annihilated, your willingness to see the people of America annihilated, that becomes the sole test of your patriotism.

Well, it is not my test, and it is not my patriotism.

I am proud of my beliefs, I am proud of my affiliations. I'll be damned, though, if I'll disclose them to my enemies to be used against my friends.

Yes, for the moment they're riding high, these arbiters of conformity. MacArthur is down, but McCarren and McCarthy are still high in the saddle.

But only for the moment. The minorities who are the majority in this country, and especially the great Negro people, they will be heard from. The working men, the hardpressed farmers, the people, yes, the ordinary people--they will be heard from.

There will be no pogroms in this country, and no concentration camps. There will be no war of atomic annihilation.

The miracle of freedom shall be reborn. And I shall be able to leave to my son--undiminished--the heritage my father bequeathed to me.

Appendix B INDEX
