

ing. It was Fate, of course, which had consumed him—Fate, and a feeble will to survive.

"Did you expect us to *laugh?*" the surgeon asked him.

The surgeon was demanding some sort of satisfaction. Billy was mystified. Billy wanted to be friendly, to help, if he could, but his resources were meager. His fingers now held the two objects from the lining of the coat. Billy decided to show the surgeon what they were.

"You thought we would enjoy being mocked?" the surgeon said. "And do you feel proud to represent America as you do?"

Billy withdrew a hand from his muff, held it under the surgeon's nose. On his palm rested a two-carat diamond and a partial denture. The denture was an obscene little artifact—silver and pearl and tangerine. Billy smiled.

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At the end of World War II, the House Committee on Un-American Activities (known commonly as HUAC), set up in 1938 to investigate "subversive" activity in the United States, called before it Hollywood writers, actors, and directors, presumably to find evidence of Communist influence in the movie industry. A number of these artists, who became known as the "Hollywood Ten," were sent to prison for refusing to answer the Committee's questions about ties with the Communist Party. The Committee also interrogated folk singer Pete Seeger, playwright Arthur Miller, and many others. This was part of a general attack on civil liberties in the atmosphere of the "Cold War" against the Soviet Union: loyalty oaths for government employees instituted by President Harry Truman, hearings before a Senate panel chaired by Senator Joseph McCarthy (giving the events of that period its name "McCarthyism"). The FBI accumulated lists of hundreds of thousands of Americans who had signed certain petitions, attended certain meetings. The leaders of the Communist Party were imprisoned. One of the artists singled out for attack was the great singer and actor Paul Robeson, who had been a fierce opponent of racism and the foreign policy of the United States. Here is a statement Robeson intended to present before HUAC, but which he was not allowed to read.

Paul Robeson's Unread Statement before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (June 12, 1956)⁷

It is a sad and bitter commentary on the state of civil liberties in America that the very forces of reaction, typified by Representative Francis Walter and his Senate

counterparts, who have denied me access to the lecture podium, the concert hall, the opera house, and the dramatic stage, now hale me before a committee of inquiry in order to hear what I have to say. It is obvious that those who are trying to gag me here and abroad will scarcely grant me the freedom to express myself fully in a hearing controlled by them.

It would be more fitting for me to question Walter, [James] Eastland and [John Foster] Dulles than for them to question me, for it is they who should be called to account for their conduct, not I. Why does Walter not investigate the truly "un-American" activities of Eastland and his gang, to whom the Constitution is a scrap of paper when invoked by the Negro people and to whom defiance of the Supreme Court is a racial duty? And how can Eastland pretend concern over the internal security of our country while he supports the most brutal assaults on fifteen million Americans by the White Citizens' Councils and the Ku Klux Klan? When will Dulles explain his reckless irresponsible "drink of war" policy by which the world might have been destroyed?

And specifically, why is Dulles afraid to let me have a passport, to let me travel abroad to sing, to act, to speak my mind? This question had been partially answered by State Department lawyers who have asserted in court that the State Department claims the right to deny me a passport because of what they called my "recognized status as a spokesman for large sections of Negro Americans" and because I have "been for years extremely active in behalf of independence of colonial peoples of Africa." The State Department has also based its denial of a passport to me on the fact that I sent a message of greeting to the Bandung Conference, convened by [Jawaharwal] Nehru, Sukarno, and other great leaders of the colored people of the world. Principally, however, Dulles objects to speeches I have made abroad against the oppression suffered by my people in the United States.

I am proud that those statements can be made about me. It is my firm intention to continue to speak out against injustices to the Negro people, and I shall continue to do all within my power in behalf of independence of colonial peoples of Africa. It is for Dulles to explain why a Negro who opposes colonialism and supports the aspirations of Negro Americans should for those reasons be denied a passport.

My fight for a passport is a struggle for freedom—freedom to travel, freedom to earn a livelihood, freedom to speak, freedom to express myself artistically and culturally. I have been denied these freedoms because Dulles, Eastland, Walter and their ilk oppose my views on colonial liberation, my resistance to oppression of Negro Americans, and my burning desire for peace with all nations. But these are views which I shall proclaim whenever given the opportunity, whether before this committee or any other body.

President [Dwight D.] Eisenhower has strongly urged the desirability of international cultural exchanges. I agree with him. The American people would welcome artistic performances by the great singers, actors, ballet troupes, opera companies, symphony orchestras and virtuosos of South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, including the folk and classic art of African peoples, the ancient culture of China, as well as the artistic works of the western world. I hope the day will come soon when Walter will consent to lowering the cruel bars which deny the American people the right to witness performances of many great foreign artists. It is certainly high time for him to drop the ridiculous "Keystone Kop" antics of fingerprinting distinguished visitors.

I find no such restrictions placed upon me abroad as Walter has had placed upon foreign artists whose performances the American people wish to see and hear. I have been invited to perform all over the world, and only the arbitrary denial of a passport has prevented realization of this particular aspect of the cultural exchange which the President favors.

I have been invited by Leslie Linder Productions to play the title role in a production of *Othello* in England. British actors' Equity Association has unanimously approved of my appearance and performance in England.

I have been invited by Workers' Music Association Ltd. to make a concert tour of England under its auspices. The invitation was signed by all of the vice-presidents, including Benjamin Britten, and was seconded by a personal invitation of R. Vaughan Williams.

I have been invited by Adam Holender, impresario, to make a concert tour of Israel, and he has tendered to me a proposed contract for that purpose.

Mosfilm, a Soviet moving-picture producing company, has invited me to play the title role in a film version of *Othello*, assuring me "of the tremendous artistic joy which association with your wonderful talent will bring us."

The British Electrical Trades Union requested me to attend their annual policy conference, recalling my attendance at a similar conference held in 1949 at which, they wrote me, "you sang and spoke so movingly."

The British Workers' Sports Association, erroneously crediting a false report that I would be permitted to travel, wrote me, "We view the news with very great happiness." They invited me "to sing to our members in London, Glasgow, Manchester or Cardiff, or all four, under the auspices of our International Fund, and on a financial basis favorable to yourself, and to be mutually agreed." They suggested a choice of three different halls in London, seating, respectively, 3,000, 4,500, and 7,000.

The Australian Peace Council invited me to make a combined "singing and peace tour" of the dominion.

I have received an invitation from the Education Committee of the London Co-operative Society to sing at concerts in London under their auspices.

A Swedish youth organization called "Democratic Youth" has invited me to visit Sweden "to give some concerts here, to get to know our culture and our people." The letter of invitation added, "Your appearance here would be greeted with the greatest interest and pleasure, and a tour in Sweden can be arranged either by us or by our organization in cooperation with others, or by any of our cultural societies or artist's bureaus, whichever you may prefer."

I have an invitation from the South Wales Miners to sing at the Miners' Singing Festival on October 6, 1956, and in a series of concerts in the mining valley thereafter.

In Manchester, England, a group of people called the "Let Paul Robeson Sing Committee" has asked me to give a concert at the Free Trade Hall in that city either preceding or following my engagement in Wales.

I have been requested by the Artistic and Literary Director of the Agence Littéraire et Artistique Parisienne pour les Échanges Culturels to sign a contract with the great French concert organizer, M. Marcel de Valmalette, to sing in a series of concerts at the Palais de Chaillot in Paris.

There is no doubt that the governments of those countries and many others where I would be invited to sing if I could travel abroad would have no fear of what I might sing or say while there, whether such governments be allies and friends of America or neutrals or those others whose friendship for the American people is obstructed by Dulles and Walter and like-minded reactionaries.

My travels abroad to sing and act and speak cannot possibly harm the American people. In the past I have won friends for the real America among the millions before whom I have performed—not for Walter, not for Dulles, not for Eastland, not for the racists who disgrace our country's name—but friends for the American Negro, our workers, our farmers, our artists.

By continuing the struggle at home and abroad for peace and friendship with all of the world's people, for an end to colonialism, for full citizenship for Negro Americans, for a world in which art and culture may abound, I intend to continue to win friends for the best in American life.

...

On September 4, 1949, I took my wife and two-year-old daughter to a concert given in an outdoor area near the town of Peekskill, New York. The concert artist was Paul Robeson. A week before, on August 27, racists had violently prevented Robeson from performing. This night, protected by unionists and others, he defiantly sang under the open sky to an audience of thousands. Meanwhile, a shouting, angry crowd gathered around the field. When the concert was over and we drove off the grounds, the cars moving in a long slow line, we saw the sides of the

this what Thomas Jefferson was talking about? Is this what Abe Lincoln was talking about? I mean, we've heard of lynchings down South. Do we really like them?" And so while there was terror in many places during the 1950s, Peckskill actually wasn't repeated.

...

The journalist I. F. Stone, who for years edited the invaluable *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, was a rare voice of journalistic integrity, speaking out on the lies behind the wars in Korea and Vietnam. In this essay, he challenges not just Joe McCarthy but the entire anti-Communist hysteria and Cold War framework accepted by many of McCarthy's liberal critics.

I. F. Stone, "But It's Not Just Joe McCarthy" (March 15, 1954)

Buds are beginning to appear on the forsythia, and welts on Joe McCarthy. The early arrival of spring and a series of humiliations for our would-be Führer have made this a most pleasant week in the capital.

The events of the week are worth savoring. Blunt Charlie Wilson called McCarthy's charges against the army "tommyrot" and for once Joe had no comeback. Next day came the ignominious announcement that he was dropping that \$2,000,000 suit against former Senator [William] Benton for calling McCarthy a crook and a liar; the lame excuse promised to launch a nationwide "I Believe Benton" movement. [Adlai] Stevenson followed with a speech calculated to impress those decent conservatives who had grown disgusted with the Eisenhower Administration's cowardice in the [General Ralph] Zwicker affair.

When McCarthy sought to answer Stevenson, the Republican National Committee turned up in Ike's [Dwight D. Eisenhower's] corner and grabbed the radio and TV time away from him. [Richard] Nixon was to reply, and McCarthy was out (unless somebody smuggled him into the program in place of Checkers [Nixon's dog]). While McCarthy fumed and threatened, his own choice for the Federal Communications Commission, Robert E. Lee, ungratefully declared he thought the networks had done enough in making time available to Nixon. Next day a Republican, albeit a liberal Republican, [Ralph] Flanders of Vermont, actually got up on the floor of the Senate and delivered a speech against McCarthy. That same night Ed Murrow telecast a brilliant TV attack on McCarthy.

Under Stevenson's leadership, Eisenhower rallied. At a press conference he endorsed the Flanders attack, said he concurred heartily in the decision to have

Nixon reply to Stevenson, asserted that he saw no reason why the networks should also give time to McCarthy. Like an escaped prisoner, flexing cramped muscles in freedom, the President also made it clear he had no intention of turning Indo-China into another Korea and even had the temerity to suggest that it might be a good idea to swap butter and other surplus farm commodities with Russia.

The White House conference was no sooner over than Senator [Homer] Ferguson as chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee released a set of suggested rules for Senate investigating committees which are no great shakes at reform but would, if adopted, make it impossible for McCarthy any longer to operate his subcommittee as a one-man show. These may be small enough gains in the fight against McCarthyism, but they were bitter pills for McCarthy to swallow.

So far McCarthy's colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been lying low. When Flanders attacked McCarthy, the Senate was as silent as it was some weeks earlier when [Allen] Ellender of Louisiana made a lone onslaught and [James] Fulbright of Arkansas cast the sole vote against his appropriation. Only [Herbert] Lehman of New York and John Sherman Cooper (R[epublican]) of Kentucky rose to congratulate Flanders. Nobody defended McCarthy, but nobody joined in with those helpful interjections which usually mark a Senate speech. When the Democratic caucus met in closed session, the Stevenson speech was ignored. Lyndon Johnson of Texas, the Democratic floor leader, is frightened of McCarthy's Texas backers.

Great issues are rarely resolved by frontal assault; for every abolitionist prepared to challenge slavery as a moral wrong, there were dozens of compromising politicians (including Lincoln) who talked as if the real issue were states' rights or the criminal jurisdiction of the Federal courts or the right of the people in a new territory to determine their own future. In the fight against the witch mania in this country and in Europe, there were few enough to defend individual victims but fewer still who were willing to assert publicly that belief in witchcraft was groundless. So today in the fight against "McCarthyism." It is sometimes hard to draw a line of principles between McCarthy and his critics. If there is indeed a monstrous and diabolic conspiracy against world peace and stability, then isn't McCarthy right? If "subversives" are at work like termites here and abroad, are they not likely to be found in the most unlikely places and under the most unlikely disguises? How talk of fair procedure if dealing with a protean and Satanic enemy?

To doubt the power of the devil, to question the existence of witches, is again to read oneself out of respectable society, to brand oneself a heretic, to incur suspicion of being oneself in league with the powers of evil. So all the fighters against McCarthyism are impelled to adopt its premises. This was true even of the Stevenson speech, but was strikingly so of Flanders.

The country is in a bad way indeed when as feeble and hysterical a speech is hailed as an attack on McCarthyism. Flanders talked of "a crisis in the age-long warfare between God and the Devil for the souls of men." He spoke of Italy as "ready to fall into Communist hands," of Britain "nibbling at the drugged bait of trade profits." There are passages of sheer fantasy, like this one: "Let us look to the South. In Latin America there are sturdy strongpoints of freedom. But there are likewise, alas, spreading infections of Communism. Whole countries are being taken over . . ." What "whole countries"? and what "sturdy strongpoints of freedom"? Flanders pictured the Iron Curtain drawn tight about the U.S. and Canada, the rest of the world captured "by infiltration and subversion." Flanders told the Senate, "We will be left with no place to trade and no place to go except as we are permitted to trade and to go by the Communist masters of the world."

The center of gravity in American politics has been pushed so far right that such childish nightmares are welcomed as the expression of liberal statesmanship. Nixon becomes a middle-of-the-road spokesman and conservative papers like the *Washington Star* and *New York Times* find themselves classified more and more as parts of the "left-wing press." In this atmosphere the Senate Republican reply to McCarthy's silly "Communist coddling" charges against the army is to launch a formal investigation of their own through [Senator Leverett] Saltonstall and the Armed Services Committee. This will be the Republican and army analogue of the [Senator Millard] Tydings inquiry into the charges against the State Department and will be greeted with the same cry of whitewash by the growing lunatic fringe behind McCarthy.

There are some charges which must be laughed off or brushed off. They cannot be disproved. If a man charges that he saw Eisenhower riding a broomstick over the White House, he will never be convinced to the contrary by sworn evidence that the President was in bed reading a Western at the time. Formal investigations like Saltonstall's merely pander to paranoia and reward demagoguery. What if McCarthy were next to attack the President and the Supreme Court? Are they, too, to be investigated? Is America to become a country in which any adventurer flanked by two ex-Communist screwballs will put any institution on the defensive?

McCarthy is personally discomfited, but McCarthyism is still on the march. [Dean] Acheson fought McCarthy, but preached a more literate variation of the Bogeyman Theory of History. Eisenhower fights McCarthy, but his Secretary of State in Caracas is pushing hard for a resolution which would spread McCarthyism throughout the hemisphere, pledging joint action for "security" and against "subversion." Nowhere in American politics is there evidence of any important figure (even Stevenson) prepared to talk in sober, mature and realistic terms of the real problems which arise in a real world where national rivalries, mass aspirations and ideas clash as naturally as the waves of the sea. The premises of free society and

of liberalism find no one to voice them, yet McCarthyism will not be ended until someone has the nerve to make this kind of a fundamental attack on it.

What are the fundamentals which need to be recognized? The first is that there can be no firm foundation for freedom in this country unless there is real peace. There can be no real peace without a readiness for live-and-let-live, i.e. for coexistence with Communism. The fear cannot be extirpated without faith in man and freedom. The world is going "socialist" in one form or another everywhere; Communism is merely the extreme form this movement takes when and where blind and backward rulers seek by terror and force to hold back the tide, as the Tsar did and as Chiang Kai-shek did.

There must be renewed recognition that societies are kept stable and healthy by reform, not by thought police; this means that there must be free play for so-called "subversive" ideas—every idea "subverts" the old to make way for the new. To shut off "subversion" is to shut off peaceful progress and to invite revolution and war. American society has been healthy in the past because there has been a constant renovating "subversion" of this kind. Had we operated on the Bogeyman Theory of History, America would have destroyed itself long ago. It will destroy itself now unless and until a few men of stature have the nerve to speak again the traditional language of free society.

The business of saying, "Of course there are witches and their power is dreadfully pervasive and they are all around us, but we must treat suspects fairly . . ." is not good enough. To acquiesce in the delusions which create a panic is no way to stem it.

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One of the darkest moments of the anti-Communist hysteria of the Cold War was the execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg on June 19, 1953. They were accused of delivering atomic secrets to the Soviet Union, and the controversy has continued over the years about that charge. Julius Rosenberg may have been involved in passing some kind of military information to the Soviet Union, which at the time was a wartime ally of the United States. His wife Ethel Rosenberg was certainly innocent (and known to be innocent by her accusers), but she was imprisoned with the hope of using her to get her husband to confess, even though their deaths would leave their two boys without parents. Both maintained their innocence to the very end. Their trial had been ridden with prejudice, taking place in the heated anti-Communist atmosphere of the Cold War. Their judge held secret meetings with the Justice Department promising to give them the death sentence if found guilty. There was an international campaign to save them, and several Supreme Court justices granted stays, but ultimately the entire Supreme Court was flown back from their summer vacations to get a majority to approve carry-

Questions for Paul Robeson's Unread Statement and I.F Stone document

Robeson

1. Do you think the reason provided by the State Department lawyers were sufficient to prohibit giving Robeson a passport, free movement, and access to public exposure? Why or why not?
2. How do you think the white American public would have respond if this speech had been given? The black American public? Do you think Robeson should have been allowed to present his speech? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Robeson/s speeches and songs were welcome throughout the rest of the world but not in the U.S.?

I.F. Stone

1. Why do you think so many people- Senators, the President, famous Americans, and ordinary folks- were afraid to challenge Joseph McCarthy?
2. Support or refute Stone's questions, "If there is indeed a monstrous and diabolic conspiracy against work peace and stability, then isn't McCarthy right"?
3. What is the "Bogeyman Theory of History"? Does the McCarthy era qualify? Can you think of other times in our history that would qualify for this description?