

**OLLI: Spring 2013: Hollywood Blacklist: Timeline: 1938-1962**

17 May 1938: Dies Committee: The Dies Committee—later known as the House Un-American Activities Committee—is formed to investigate subversive activities within the US. The committee, headed by Texas Democrat Martin Dies, initially targets Nazi sympathizers but eventually comes to focus almost entirely on the communist threat.

28 June 1940: Smith Act: Congress passes the Smith Act, which makes it illegal to assist any groups "who teach, advocate, or encourage the overthrow or destruction of the government of the United States by force or violence." Hundreds of American communists will later be charged for violations of the Smith Act.

1944: Walt Disney & King Vidor help found the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals; active supporters include Gary Cooper & John Wayne.

4 February 1945: Yalta: Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Josef Stalin meet in the Soviet resort town of Yalta to make plans for the postwar era. In a problematic compromise, Roosevelt accedes to Churchill's and Stalin's plans for spheres of influence in Europe even while convincing the British and Soviet leaders to sign on to a statement affirming the principles of democracy.

12 April 1945: Roosevelt Dies: Franklin Delano Roosevelt dies of cerebral hemorrhage just 82 days into his fourth term, elevating newly installed Vice President Harry S. Truman to the presidency.

5 March 1946: Iron Curtain Speech: Former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivers his famous "Iron Curtain" speech at a college in Missouri. "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic," Churchill declares, "an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent" of Europe.

December 1946: HUAC holds secret meetings: Members of the House Un-American Activities Committee [H.U.A.C.] hold secret hearings in Hollywood and decide to convene full committee hearings in 1947.

12 March 1947: Truman Doctrine: President Harry S. Truman requests congressional funding to support the government of Greece in its civil war against communist insurgents, couching his request in dramatic rhetoric now known as the Truman Doctrine, which defines communist victory anywhere in the world as a threat to American security: "Totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the US."

21 March 1947: Truman Loyalty Oaths: President Harry S. Truman issues Executive Order 9835, establishing a Loyalty- Security Program for all federal employees. Designed to pre-empt Republican charges of communist infiltration of the government, Truman's loyalty oaths heighten the country's growing fears of communist subversion.

23 June 1947: Taft-Hartley Act: Congress passes the Taft-Hartley Labor-Management Relations Act over President Truman's veto, sharply curtailing the rights of organized labor while forcing unions to purge communists from their ranks.

September 1947: The Committee for the First Amendment: In retaliation to the harsh treatment of the Hollywood Ten for enacting their civil liberties & the ensuing treatment of the entertainment industry, the Committee for the First Amendment is formed among actors & screenwriters in their support. Among members are actors Katherine Hepburn, Lauren Bacall, Humphrey Bogart, Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra & Groucho Marx.

20 October 1947: House UnAmerican Activities Committee: H.U.A.C. chairman J. Parnell Thomas opens hearings in Washington, DC into alleged influence & infiltration by Communist Party members within the motion picture industry. Early witnesses are friendly, and include philosopher-author Ayn Rand.

27 October 1947: John Lawson Refuses: Screenwriter John Howard Lawson, a hostile witness before the House UnAmerican Activities Committee, refuses to answer, on constitutional grounds, whether he is or was a member of the Communist Party. He is ejected from the hearing and later charged with Contempt of Congress.

24 November 1947: Hollywood Ten: The House of Representatives issues citations for Contempt of Congress to the Hollywood Ten --- John Howard Lawson, Alvah Bessie, Herbert Biberman, Lester Cole, Edward Dmytryk, Ring Lardner Jr., Albert Maltz, Samuel Ornitz, Adrian Scott, and Dalton Trumbo --- for refusing to answer questions about alleged communist influence in the motion picture industry.

25 November 1947: Hollywood Blacklisting: The Motion Picture Association confirms the blacklisting of the Hollywood Ten from employment in the film industry.

25 February 1948: Czech Coup: A coup in Czechoslovakia installs a communist government, heightening American fears that communists will seize power in Eastern Europe by any means necessary.

Spring & Summer 1948: Hollywood Ten on Trial: The Hollywood Ten are tried, convicted & sentenced to prison terms.

1 May 1948: Arrest in Alabama: Glenn Taylor, Progressive Party candidate for Vice President on Henry Wallace's ticket, is arrested in Alabama for violating segregation laws by attempting to hold an integrated political rally. Taylor's jailor is Birmingham police commissioner Bull Connor, who will later become notorious for unleashing attack dogs & hoses on peaceful civil rights protestors associated with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

17 June 1948: States Rights Party: Southern Democrats opposed to President Truman and the Democratic Party's liberal position on civil rights convene in Alabama to form the new States Rights Party (better known as Dixiecrats), which nominates South Carolinian Strom Thurmond for president.

24 June 1948: Berlin Airlift: The Soviets blockade West Berlin, leaving the city—which is surrounded on all sides by Communist East Germany—without access to food and supplies. The Truman administration organizes a military airlift to supply the besieged city. The Berlin Airlift will last for nearly a year, delivering 1.5 million tons of supplies via 200,000 separate flights before the blockade is lifted in May 1949.

2 July 1948: Soviets Reject Marshall Plan: The Soviet Union rejects participation in the Marshall Plan, with Stalin's Foreign Minister, V.M. Molotov, calling it an "imperialist" plot to enslave Eastern Europe.

15 July 1948: Dixiecrats: The Democratic Party Convention nominates President Truman to run again as its candidate for president. Northern liberals succeed in including a strong civil rights plank in the party platform, leading to the defection of conservative Southern Democrats to the segregationist States Rights (or Dixiecrat) Party.

26 July 1948: Truman Desegregates the Military: President Truman signs Executive Order 9981, ending racial segregation of the armed forces.

3 August 1948: Alger Hiss Named Communist: Former communist Whittaker Chambers testifies before the House UnAmerican Activities Committee, naming Alger Hiss—an important figure in Franklin Roosevelt's State Department—as a communist agent.

5 August 1948: Alger Hiss Testifies: Alger Hiss testifies before the House UnAmerican Activities Committee, denying that he is, or ever was, a member of the Communist Party.

25 August 1948: First TV Broadcast of Congressional Hearing: Alger Hiss and Whittaker Chambers both testify in a televised hearing of the House UnAmerican Activities Committee. It is the first time any Congressional hearing has been broadcast over TV.

2 November 1948: Truman's Surprise Reelection: President Harry S. Truman is elected to a second term as president, defeating Republican Thomas Dewey, Progressive Henry Wallace, and Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond in the election of 1948.

1949: Motion Pictures Industries Council Formed: To rid the film industry of communists, the Motion Pictures Industries Council is formed; leaders include the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees head Roy Brewer, Screen Actors Guild president Ronald Reagan, & Cecil B. DeMille & Dore Schary.

12 May 1949: Berlin Airlift Ends: The Berlin airlift ends in victory for the Western Allies as the Soviets lift their blockade on the city.

13 June 1949: Hollywood Ten convictions upheld: Hollywood Ten convictions are upheld by Justice Clark of the Washington, DC, Court of Appeals.

29 August 1949: Soviet Atom Bomb: The Soviet Union successfully detonates its first atomic bomb. The loss of its atomic monopoly comes as a terrible shock to the United States and its people.

1 October 1949: Mao Victorious in China: Chairman Mao declares victory in the Chinese Civil War, creating the Communist People's Republic of China.

2 November 1949: CIO Boots Communist Labor: The Congress of Industrial Organizations votes in its national convention to revoke the charter of the United Electrical Workers, the third largest union in the CIO, for failing to purge itself of communist influence. Ultimately twelve left-leaning unions, and countless individual left-wing organizers, will be booted from the CIO.

November 1949: Hollywood Ten's appeals hearing: U.S. Supreme Court refuses to hear appeals of the Hollywood Ten.

10 December 1949: Chiang Kai-Shek Flees: Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, longtime American ally and leader of the anti-communist Chinese Nationalists, flees mainland China to organize the Republic of China on the island of Taiwan.

21 January 1950: Alger Hiss Convicted: Alger Hiss is convicted of perjury after a jury concludes that he made false statements in denying Whittaker Chambers' allegations that the two men had known each other as communists in the 1930s. Hiss will serve more than three years in federal prison.

9 February 1950: Joseph McCarthy Claims Targets: Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy gives a speech in Wheeling, Virginia, dramatically claiming, "I have in my hand a list of 205 cases of individuals who appear to be either card-carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist Party" within the United States State Department.

February 1950: Communist Influence within Federal Government Investigated: The Senate Committee on Government Operations opens an investigation into communist influence within the federal government, with the participation of Sen. McCarthy.

1 June 1950: Republican Senators Denounce McCarthy: Seven Republican Senators, led by Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, denounce Sen. McCarthy for attacking "individual freedom."

22 June 1950: Official Blacklist Created: The right-wing journal *Counterattack* publishes the booklet "Red Channels," which includes mostly-false accusations of communist activities by 151 actors, writers, musicians, broadcast journalists, and others in the entertainment industry, effectively creating the official Hollywood Blacklist.

25 June 1950: North Korea Invades South: Communist North Korean troops invade South Korea, beginning the Korean War.

23 September 1950: Congress passes the McCarran Internal Security Act. The Internal Security Act becomes the first piece of legislation passed that can really defy the US Constitution and ban the right to assembly and the freedom of belief. It requires all organizations and anyone trained in espionage to register with the Justice Department, legalizes the deportation of communists and allows for the detention of suspected spies and "subversives." The Act is upheld in 1951 by the Supreme Court when it is challenged in the Dennis (communist leader) vs. US case.

21 March 1951: HUAC Investigations Resume: H.U.A.C. resumes investigations into Communist influence in Hollywood, possibly fueled by C.G.O. hearings in the Senate. Witnesses include Larry Parks, Edward G. Robinson & John Garfield.

25 March 1951: Rosenbergs Convicted: Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are convicted of passing atomic secrets to the Soviet Union.

1952: Robeson Testifies: African American actor-singer Paul Robeson testifies before H.U.A.C.; his passport is then revoked.

January 1952: Elia Kazan is called before HUAC but refuses to name names.

Oscar season 1952: While nominated for Best Director for *A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE*, Kazan learns he faces the blacklist; he loses the Oscar.

April 1952: Kazan & Miller meet at Kazan's Connecticut home, where Kazan tells his friend he plans to name names.

10 April 1952: Kazan Testifies: Second testimony of director Elia Kazan, during which he names names.

April 1952: Miller reviews court records in Salem doing research for *The Crucible*; he decides upon the play's dramatic arc after hearing news reports of Kazan's testimony before HUAC.

21 May 1952: Lillian Hellman Testifies. Author refuses to name names; "I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions."

1952: McCarthy Appointed Chairman: Newly-re-elected Sen. McCarthy is appointed chairman of the Senate Committee on Government Operations.

September 1952: Chaplin departs US: Charlie Chaplin leaves for a trip to England with his family; US government announces that he will not be allowed back into the country.

1953: Screen Writers Guild allows producers to remove screen credits for any screenwriter with communist ties.

22 January 1953: *The Crucible* opens on Broadway: Arthur Miller's anti-blacklist play *The Crucible* opens in New York City; later wins 2 Tony Awards.

5 March 1953: Stalin Dies: Soviet Communist leader Josef Stalin dies of a stroke.

9 March 1954: Murrow Exposes McCarthy: Journalist Edward R. Murrow exposes Sen. McCarthy on the CBS News TV program *See It Now*.

11 March 1954: US Army Charges McCarthy: The U.S. Army charges Sen. McCarthy & subcommittee chief counsel Roy M. Cohn with exerting pressure for favored treatment for Pvt. G. David Schine, a former consultant to H.U.A.C.

6 April 1954: McCarthy Responds: *See It Now* airs Sen. McCarthy's filmed rebuttal to Murrow, which charges that Murrow had in the past "engaged in propaganda for communist causes."

22 April 1954: Army-McCarthy Hearings: The Senate Army-McCarthy hearings begin; they end on June 17 (for a total of 187 televised hours).

few weeks after Army-McCarthy hearings: 1954: ON THE WATERFRONT opens; Kazan receives Best Director Oscar, DGA Award & many others; later Kazan wrote: "When Brando, at the end, yells at Lee Cobb, the mob boss, 'I'm glad what I done --- you hear me? --- glad what I done!' that was me saying, with identical heat, that I was glad I testified as I had. ON THE WATERFRONT was my own story; every day that I worked on that film, I was telling the world where I stood."

9 June 1954: Joseph Welch Accuses McCarthy: Army attorney Joseph Welch, disgusted by McCarthy's attacks against his own assistant counsel, asks the senator, "Have you no sense of decency, sir, at long last?"

18 August 1954: Pete Seeger Testifies: Folksinger Pete Seeger testifies before H.U.A.C. He refuses to answer questions, is sentenced for contempt, and wins on appeal.

2 December 1954: McCarthy Censured: The U.S. Senate votes to condemn Sen. McCarthy for "conduct that tends to bring the Senate into dishonor and disrepute" for his actions during the Congressional hearings.

14 October 1955: Zero Mostel Testifies: Comedian refuses to name names & confronts HUAC on ideological matters, which is rarely done.

12 June 1956: Further testimony of singer-actor Paul Robeson before H.U.A.C.

21 June 1956: Arthur Miller appears before HUAC & refuses to name names; before his appearance, word comes from the committee that if the chair can have his picture taken with Marilyn Monroe, Miller will not have to appear; Miller refuses.

2 May 1957: McCarthy dies: Sen. McCarthy dies of acute hepatitis at Washington's Bethesda Naval Hospital.

1 June 1957: Miller Cited: Playwright Arthur Miller is cited for contempt for refusing to name names during testimony before H.U.A.C.; his passport is taken away.

1958: US Supreme Court Rules: The U.S. Supreme Court rules in Paul Robeson's favor, confirming that a passport can not be revoked without due process of law.

1958: US Supreme Court rejects the argument that the Hollywood blacklist violates employees' rights; US Court of Appeals overturns Miller's contempt conviction.

1959: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences decides that screenwriters & actors on the blacklist will no longer be prohibited from consideration for Oscars; the staunchly anti-communist Motion Picture Industry Council ends its activities.

1960: Dalton Trumbo, one of the Hollywood Ten, receives credit for writing the screenplays of EXODUS and SPARTACUS, becoming the first blacklisted writer to receive screen credit.

28 June 1962: Jury Awards Millions in Libel Suit: A New York City jury awards former radio & TV personality John Henry Faulk \$3.5 million in his libel suit against the group AWARE, Inc. (connected with the publication "Red Currents") and two individuals who had accused Faulk of having communist sympathies, resulting in his being blacklisted; the judgment is later reduced to \$550,000 by an appeals court.