



GERHART EISLER

*My Side
of the Story*

THE STATEMENT
THE NEWSPAPERS
REFUSED TO PRINT

THE PROTEST

Brought before the Thomas-Rankin Un-American Activities Committee in Washington on Feb. 6, 1947, Gerhart Eisler, a prisoner flanked by two U. S. security officers, insisted on reading a statement of protest of his treatment before being sworn as a witness. The Committee denied him the right. His refusal to be sworn until he could read the statement led to his citation for contempt of Congress.

This is the protest, hand-written in jail, the Committee would not allow him to read:

I am not a free man at present. I am an anti-fascist, political prisoner in the United States.

I was arrested two days ago without a warrant being shown to me.

I have no doubt that this arrest was instigated by the Un-American Activities Committee. It whistled and the Attorney General jumped obediently and put the law into the service of Thomas and Rankin.

The reasons for my arrest are clear:

1. The Un-American Activities Committee wants to prevent me from telling in public meetings the truth about the malicious invention of Budenz, the turncoat and provocateur.

2. The Committee wants to create the false impression that I had to be arrested in order to appear before the hearing.

As a German Communist, I always had only contempt for my jailers. And the more so when they do their dirty business behind the hypocritical mask of so-called democrats.

Let the American people and the world beware of American reaction so cynically represented by the Un-American Activities Committee and their obedient servants in high authority.

GERHART EISLER.

INTRODUCTION

MY SIDE OF THE STORY is the defense Gerhart Eisler had prepared for his appearance under subpoena February 6, 1947, before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He had planned to submit this statement in the course of his testimony. However, he was arrested on February 4 by the Department of Justice when Representative J. Parnell Thomas, chairman of the Committee, requested the Attorney General to place him under surveillance. He was held at Ellis Island as a dangerous enemy alien and brought to Washington for the hearing under guard.

Under these circumstances Mr. Eisler refused to be sworn for questioning by the Committee until permitted to read a two minute protest. Permission was refused. The House of Representatives cited him for contempt of Congress on February 18, and he was later indicted.

Mr. Eisler has since been moved to the Federal House of Detention in New York, where he is denied liberties accorded to Nazis at Ellis Island.

The Civil Rights Congress has undertaken a campaign for Mr. Eisler's defense on the grounds that he is unlawfully held, that he is not an enemy alien (he was given complete freedom here throughout the war period), and that far from being in contempt of Congress, the Committee itself violated democratic procedures and plain American decency.

The defense of Mr. Eisler, and the demand for his release to return to his homeland with his wife, is part of C.R.C.'s

larger campaign for the abolition of the Thomas-Rankin Committee. More and more Americans are reaching the belief that this Committee represents a grave menace to our constitutional and democratic liberties. C.R.C. will defend, as in the past, all those victimized by this most un-American committee, be they outstanding Americans or an anti-fascist refugee and German Communist, as is Mr. Eisler.

MY SIDE OF THE STORY is published in the interests of American fair play. Mr. Eisler provided the newspapers, press services and magazines with copies; but ignoring his story, they have preferred the lurid views and alleged facts of the Un-American Activities Committee and its odd assortment of witnesses.

CIVIL RIGHTS CONGRESS.

My Side of the Story

by GERHART EISLER

As the new season of Red-hunting opens today, let me tell you, or try to tell you at the beginning: I am not a spy, not a foreign agent, not the "boss" of all the Reds in this or any other country, and that I never did anything to harm the American people for whom I have a great deal of sympathy. I am a German Communist, a political refugee, wanting to go home.

I am very glad to be able to tell my side of the story at last, a story invented by provocateurs and rabble-rousing agitators to smear American progressives and poison the international atmosphere.

I expect you will give me the same opportunity to talk, unhampered and freely, as you gave to Budenz (Louis Budenz, a former member of the Communist Party and now an assistant professor at Fordham University). I quote Mr. Rankin from the record of the testimony of Budenz on November 22, 1946:

I want to say, Mr. Budenz, that we are going to give you all the time you want, if it takes from now until Christmas or from now until this time next year.

I shall not take that long because, after 13 years of bitter exile, I want to go back to Germany instead of wasting my time in discussing the slanders, the falsehoods and the nonsense of a provocateur. I demand that the injustice done to me, a German anti-fascist refugee, in preventing me from going back where I came from, shall be at once undone. If

Red-baiting is to be the new great American pastime, it can be done without me. The world is getting fed up with it; so am I.

I understand this Committee is a very interesting and remarkable American experiment in political inquisition and persecution. The people everywhere in the world, and especially we progressive Europeans, look at this experiment partly with bewilderment and partly, to say it frankly, with contempt. I repeat the word contempt.

Witch Hunt with Kidgloves

Mr. Parnell Thomas, your new chairman, has repeatedly stated in public that he will not follow the notorious practice of Mr. Rankin—everybody will recall the treatment of the famous Professor Harlow Shapley by Mr. Rankin—and that he will give all his witnesses the same chance to tell their story, to state their opinions and the facts as they see them, and the chance to accuse and defend as they deem necessary. He will, so to speak, organize the witch hunt with kid gloves on.

I beg you to excuse my "Germanized English," as Budenz calls it. But it is better to speak the truth with an accent than detestable falsehood in perfect English. Axis Sally, I heard for instance, spoke a very good English. I hope I shall make myself clear, despite my accent, the accent of a foreigner, the accent of a German Communist who never had any intention of becoming an American and is here in this country against his will, intentions and plans.

It is, of course, unavoidable that in my rebuttal to the assertions of Budenz, I shall have to say quite a few things which some of you gentlemen may not like to hear. No personal offense is intended. Many things have been said about me and done to me which I don't like either. I had to take them. So you will have to do the same. He who dishes out must be able to take it. Of course, some of you gentlemen may not be able to set aside your prejudices against Communists, progressives, liberals or anyone else who has the tendency to look forward.

That is human and I understand perfectly. On the other hand, I am human, too, and cannot set aside my contempt and prejudice against all forms of reaction, backwardness, bigotry and stoolpigeons. I have seen during my lifetime in many lands so many similar Committees with ideas like yours that, with the exception of the American language, your Committee could be at home in any country in the world where reaction and intolerance play yet an important role. Fortunately such countries become fewer and fewer.

I understand from many experiences in my homeland and in other countries that Red-baiters, provocateurs and stoolpigeons always have a holiday when social reaction attacks the workers and all progressive elements. There is nothing specially American, or French, or Canadian, or Chinese in it. There are not many national differences between the eggs laid by reactionary hens in different countries. One is similar to the other. Such things come and go, and even the bad smell usually disappears.

Record Must Stand Against Prejudice

I understand perfectly well that I have no easy task here. If you do not believe what this man Budenz told you, but you only make believe it is true because of your specific brand of political interests, I could talk till doomsday without success. On the other hand, if you are really so prejudiced and ignorant of the facts of life that you believe all the nonsense Budenz told you, my words have hardly a chance to penetrate the armor of such prejudice. So I shall have to rely on the record and speak for the record. I expect, too, it will be the record of what I said and not anyone's opinion of what I said.

This Committee is supposed to investigate so-called un-American activities. There are quite a few Americans who have very different ideas of what are un-American activities. There are even outstanding Americans who consider a Committee such as yours a disgrace to American democratic tradi-

tions. But this is not for me to decide. It is a matter for Americans who know better than I the great democratic traditions of their country for which I have great respect.

As for me I am a foreigner, a German anti-fascist and not an American. I never had the ambition, nor would it be possible, to behave exactly like an American or a Russian or a Greek for that matter. So a somewhat dogmatic interpretation could easily classify everything I did, said or wrote as un-American. In this sense 95 per cent of the people of the world who are not Americans, and have no intention of becoming Americans, are un-American. But naturally, you cannot investigate the whole world, although someone here may dream of the Century of the Investigated Man, the Century of the Un-American Activities Committee.

An Anti-Fascist Is Not Anti-American

So if you accuse me of not looking upon the world with the eyes of an American, and especially with your eyes, you are definitely right. I look upon the world with the eyes of a German Communist, guided by the principles of a German Communist, which I did not change and would not sell even if I were to become an assistant professor at some American university after having been instructed, or to use the language of sports, after having been fixed.

Whatever ignoramuses say about Communists, a Communist's first love is his country. And that is the reason why I, a German Communist, can agree with you if you call me un-American. You see, it cannot be helped; there are people who are not Americans and who have their own way of life.

Having said this, I must add emphatically: From all this follows by no means that I am anti-American. The Nazis were anti-American, anti-Russian, anti-French, anti-Polish; in short they were against all un-German peoples. As a German Communist I am in sympathy with all the peoples in the world, with the more progressive and the less progressive. I may dislike American or Spanish reaction, but never the American or

Spanish people. As a matter of fact I like the American people very much. Not all of them, but most of them. I would never do anything to harm any people in the world. On the contrary, I went to Spain to do my bit in the fight against the German invasion. And, by the way, I learned in Spain how courageous Americans can fight for a good cause. In the war against Hitler Germany my heart, my full sympathy and all my activities were on the side of the heroic soldiers of the American people and their great allies. Your selective service classified me as too old to become a soldier in your army. But if they would have taken me I would not have fought badly, because if I am convinced a cause is righteous, I am not a bad fighter. If New York would have been bombed, which thank God did not happen, I would have done my duty as an air raid warden. Let me correct the malicious nonsense told by Budenz that I became an air raid warden illegally. My neighbors came to me and asked me to do service as an air raid warden. I told the police that I am a foreigner, and the police told me that this did not matter as there were hundreds of thousands of non-citizens doing all kinds of civilian duties to help the war effort. I became legally an air raid warden, I got a citation for faithful service, and I gave blood to the blood bank.

If the United States had been invaded by the Nazi or Japanese armies, I would have defended your country against the invaders in the ranks of American citizens.

Not "Right or Wrong, My Hitler"

But all the time I never would have become an American agent. I would have remained, as I did, a German Communist, hoping and hoping that the Germans would liberate themselves from the Hitler dictatorship and end this criminal war—a hope which unfortunately did not come true.

You see, as a German Communist I did not say, right or wrong, my Hitler, my gas chambers, my Himmler, my race haters, my trusts, my un-German Activities Committee, my

imperialist war. In this war the right was on the side of the Americans, the Russians, the British and the other allies. A Communist patriot wants to liberate his own country from all forms of oppression, exploitation and backwardness, but he will never side with his own native reaction and imperialism in their aggressions against or exploitation of other peoples.

“Foreign Agent”—An Old Nazi Accusation

This is one of the reasons why very often we Communists are called foreign agents by imperialists and their hirelings and by fools. For instance, we German Communists were called foreign agents by the Nazis and their henchmen because we fought with all our force against the aggression of Hitler against other peoples. German imperialists and Nazis especially called us agents of Stalin, agents of the Soviet Union, because we tried to explain to the Germans that to make war against the Soviet Union instead of keeping friendship with the Soviet people is not only a terrible crime, but must lead to the worst national catastrophe in history for the German people. Of course German Communists and progressives were also often called American and British agents by the Nazis, because we thought your country and your allies deserved victory. To have shown sympathy for President Roosevelt in Nazi Germany meant to gamble with one's life. In your country, fortunately, it costs at present only one's job if some official or a janitor in a government building dares to show some sympathy for Joseph Stalin and the Soviet people. The German Red-baiters, the German Nazi dictatorship, this most developed form of a Committee against so-called un-German activities, were victorious over us Reds, over the German workers and all other progressive elements in Germany, and led the Germans down the road to the abyss.

If I may advise you, take a lesson from the terrible experiences of Germany. I know you have the habit of slandering your own Communists as foreign agents just as Himmler

slandered us German Communists, because they fight for friendship with the Soviet Union. As a German I advise you urgently not to listen to your warmongers. It would be very terrible for you, for the Russians and for the whole world. As a German I have a special interest in hoping that your warmongering fools will be kept under lock and key. I do not want to imagine what would remain of the remainder of Germany in a new terrible war; I am afraid nothing but a kind of New Mexican atom bomb desert.

Before Hollywood makes the picture, "The Song of Budenz," they should make sure of him. Because he isn't a saint and he lies like the devil. I don't know whether he has started to love his enemies as the Bible prescribes, but he sure tries to stab his former political friends in the back in the way of Judas Iscariot. I never met that man Budenz and I never wanted to meet him; I never sent Budenz a letter, a note, an article, even a word. All he has told you about this is nothing but lies, inventions and provocations. Certainly I could have met him by accident as I met other people, but of all the misfortunes I had in my life, this misfortune did not hit me.

Now let me tell you how it happened that I am here in the United States.

Budenz told you I am not a genuine political refugee, but that I came to the United States to boss all the Reds. I quote Budenz from his testimony on November 22, 1946:

He—that means me—just makes the claim he came here on transit visa on his way to Mexico. He claimed he was on his way to Mexico. But he could not get into Mexico. He says because Austrians and Germans were not admitted. I think anyone who would perjure himself on his political status to get into America would perjure himself as to his nationality if he wanted to get into Mexico. The general inference is the United States was where he wanted to land.

The general inference is, of course, quite different from that which Budenz claims.

What are the facts? Shortly before the outbreak of the war, in 1939, I with many thousand other anti-fascist refugees were arrested in Paris. The men of Munich who were leading France into disaster arrested us because we were genuine anti-fascists. Many of us had fought as so-called premature anti-fascists on the Loyalist side in Spain. The men of Munich were naturally not softhearted in their treatment of foreign anti-fascist refugees. In their prisons and concentration camps, especially in the infamous camp of Vernet, we were beaten, starved, abused and not a few of us were killed. Then the Nazi armies started to overrun France. To all the misery we suffered was added the danger that we would be extradited to Hitler Germany to be tortured and killed.

I remember very well our discussions in the camp of Vernet. Neither I nor anyone else discussed how to overthrow the American government, nor did I make any plans how to boss all the American Reds; neither did I have the slightest idea that I would, after the war, have to appear before anything like the Un-American Activities Committee in order to defend myself against the provocations of American rats and fight for my return home. What we discussed was how to remain firm under the torture of the Gestapo.

Mexican Government Offered Aid

In those critical days there came help. The then President of Mexico, General Cardenas, sent to many of us an invitation to come to Mexico for sanctuary. The diplomatic representatives of Mexico in France intervened strongly in our behalf. Also many decent Americans demanded from Vichy the right for refugees of all creeds and political opinions to leave France.

As a result, I and many others were sent from Vernet to another concentration camp near Marseilles in order to prepare our departure for Mexico. The Mexican consul-general in Marseilles, Mr. Bosquez, gave me and other refugees Mexican substitutes for passports, but there were new diffi-

culties. No boat at that time left from Marseilles directly to Mexico. Very few French boats sailed at all because the British had captured the boats of Vichy France. The French authorities would grant us exit permits to leave for Mexico only on condition that we obtain transit visa through the United States. The reason for this was that French boats went only to Martinique and from Martinique no connection with Mexico existed. We would have to travel from Martinique to Mexico via the United States. The French did not want us in Martinique so they wanted to make absolutely sure we would leave for Mexico by way of the United States.

American Transit Permit Granted

For months we tried to secure transit visa through the United States. The American consul-general at first blocked our journey to Mexico by refusing us transit visa. The French authorities threatened to send us back to Vernet, which meant into the hands of the Gestapo. The Mexican consul-general in Marseilles, a Catholic—I shall never forget his human attitude toward us—did everything to convince the American consul-general to grant us transit visa. He emphasized that the President of Mexico, General Cardenas, had invited us personally and that America had no right to practically nullify this invitation of the Mexican government.

At last the American consul-general granted transit visa to me and other refugees, among them Communists of different countries. We were told we would not be allowed to go on shore in the United States, which was perfectly all right with us. Those among us who were Communists were advised by men who knew the immigration laws of the United States not to write into the application forms for a transit visa that we were Communists, because that would have made it technically absolutely impossible for the American consul-general to grant us even a transit visa.

In the choice between death at the hands of the Nazis and not to write in these application forms that we were Com-

munists, I and other Communists of different lands chose the latter. But I never denied in the United States that I am a Communist. I am proud to be one.

What would everyone of you have done in such a situation? What would a Budenz have done? Well, maybe he would have gone over to the Nazis as a solution. In any case I do not think there is a jury in this country who would call this perjury and declare me guilty. The F.B.I., the Justice Department, the Immigration authorities, the State Department—they knew about these facts for many years. They didn't do anything about it; they granted me an exit permit at the end of July, 1946. Apparently they are not convinced as is Budenz, the so-called Christian, that a German anti-fascist would rather die at the hands of the Nazis than violate the red tape of the immigration laws of the United States, which at times has very inhuman aspects. This red tape was responsible for the death of many innocent people in Europe who could have been saved.

In the middle of May, 1941, I and many others left Marseilles on the French boat, "Winnipeg," bound for Martinique. Despite Budenz, we left as refugees in the ordinary sense of the word. Alas, as so often happens in time of war, something unexpected happened. Not very far from Martinique our boat was captured by a Dutch cruiser and brought to Trinidad in the West Indies. Again we were put into a concentration camp where we were carefully screened by the British military authorities. They were not interested in whether someone was a Communist, Social Democrat, or a Catholic; they wanted to know whether we were genuine German anti-fascists. Those recognized as such were allowed to leave. I was among them.

Arrived in New York, June 13, 1941

But again the old trouble—no boat from Trinidad to Mexico. We had to take an American boat for New York and change there for Mexico. And so I arrived in the port of New

York on the S.S. "Evangeline" on June 13, 1941. Those of us headed for Mexico were brought to Ellis Island. The Yugoslavs, Hungarians and Czechs among us were allowed to proceed on the next boat to Mexico. Those of us who were Germans or Austrians had to remain at Ellis Island. There existed an emergency law directed against German Bundists and Italian fascists, prohibiting their departure from the United States to any Latin-American country. This law, unfortunately, made no distinction between German and Italian anti-fascists and fascists. So I with other German anti-fascists had to stay at Ellis Island for two and one-half months, until the authorities decided what to do with us. I was finally released from Ellis Island on bail with the right to stay in this country for sixty days. During these sixty days I again asked for permission to go to Mexico. Again it was refused. So I had to stay here during the war whether I liked it or not, as an ordinary refugee.

Never Wanted to Remain Here

My transit visa was changed to a visitor visa. On May 25, 1945 immediately after the downfall of Hitler, I with seventeen other German anti-fascist refugees applied to the State Department for permission to return to Germany. Again we were refused. Time after time we repeated our plea. We applied to all other embassies of the occupying powers—for a long time without success. Then, at last, the Soviet government granted me and other German anti-fascists a transit visa through Russia in order to proceed to Berlin or Leipzig where I lived and worked before Hitler came to power.

The State Department granted me an exit permit on July 31, 1946. Before it was granted the F.B.I. questioned me for many hours. It was only in October that I was able to get a place on a boat. I was to sail on October 18, 1946. My baggage was already cleared and partially on the boat, when on October 16 I found out by accident that my exit permit was

cancelled without reason given. But I found out soon that Budenz and your Committee had been the reason.

That is the story of how it happened that I am in this country. It is a matter of official record; all documents are in my possession, and the authorities—the F.B.I., the State Department, and the Immigration authorities—know it is so. They know I came here by accident, that I did everything possible to go to Mexico, and as soon as it was possible, to leave for Germany. Budenz is nothing but a cheap liar when he tries to tell you that I came here in order to boss the Reds, that I came here on anyone's order, or through anyone's influence. Neither the Pope, nor Stalin, nor Churchill, nor Roosevelt, nor Fulton Sheen, nor anyone else had a hand in my being here.

What did I do during my enforced stay in this country? Whatever it was I alone am responsible. No government of any state, neither the Vatican, Great Britain, the Soviet Union nor any international organization had anything to do with any of my activities. During my stay in this country I remained a man responsible only to himself. I never had any trouble with the American authorities; although a forced guest in this country, I kept the rules a guest is supposed to keep.

Wrote for Anti-Nazi *German-American*

I have told you of my position as a German anti-fascist in regard to the war. I have tried to tell you that I was unconditionally for the victory of the American and allied arms in the war. I admired very much the late President Roosevelt, and I considered anyone who tried to weaken the war effort of the American people a traitor to the great cause of humanity's fight against German fascism and the Japanese Pearl Harbor scoundrels.

By profession a journalist and writer, I tried to put my pen in the service of the cause of the allies. Soon after the entrance of the United States into the war, the late Dr. Kurt Rosenfeld, former Prussian Minister of Justice and for many years a member of the Social-Democrat faction of the German Reichs-

tag, founded together with other Americans the German language paper, the *German-American*. Dr. Rosenfeld, a political refugee, became a citizen of your country. Although I had many political differences with him in Germany (I was a Communist, he a Social-Democrat), he was a very good friend of mine. He was my lawyer when I was in prison in Germany, and he did everything he could in the United States to help us German anti-fascists in the concentration camps and prisons in France. He asked me if I would be ready to write regularly for the *German-American*, a non-Communist paper. Its main purpose was to counteract Nazi and Bundist influences among German-Americans, and to convince them of the necessity of the total defeat of Hitler Germany and for support of the allied war effort. I agreed readily and became a voluntary staff writer on the *German-American*, where I wrote my articles unsigned and signed. I signed the name of Gerhart Eisler or my initials. After Dr. Rosenfeld's death, the trade unionist, Mr. Gustav Faber, became the editor-in-chief. He asked me to continue my work which I did.

The *German-American*, I believe, has a good war record. It won citations for extraordinary activities in war bond drives and in the campaigns for blood donations, and the military authorities consented to its distribution in the German prisoner of war camps in the United States for education and enlightenment. I am not ashamed of the work I did for the *German-American*. It helped, it did not harm the American war effort.

With two other German political refugees I wrote the book *The Lesson of Germany*, an evaluation of 400 years of German history, in order to help the American public understand how fascism could take power in Germany. I also did research work for magazines and for people who lectured. I did everything I could to mobilize help for political anti-fascist refugees and for inmates of concentration camps.

And now I come to Hans Berger. This terrible Hans Berger!

Budenz and a few people of his type have made quite a living telling stories about Hans Berger.

The Tale of Hans Berger

I was asked by Mr. Joseph Starobin, foreign editor of the *Daily Worker*, whether I would write from time to time for the Communist press about my German and European experiences. Under normal conditions I would have done it. I would have written under my name. But it was war; I was a German, a Communist in a country whose authorities don't like their own Communists very much, and foreign Communists still less. I didn't want to have any scandal, I didn't want to give the professional Red-baiters in this country ammunition for raising hell. I agreed readily to give Mr. Starobin my material, my ideas and knowledge, especially about German and European questions, for whatever use he could make of them. Many refugee journalists did this and many American journalists accepted such help. Mr. Starobin did not like my proposal; he did not want to write and sign articles for which he had not done all the work. We finally made a compromise. Whenever he used my material, my research and some of my ideas he would write the articles under the pen name of Hans Berger. He proposed this German-sounding name because 90 per cent of all the Hans Berger articles dealt with Germany. In many cases I saw the articles only after they were printed. Not always, of course, did I agree with everything written. But the articles were his responsibility and in general they were very good.

This is the truth about Hans Berger; a name which I never used in my writings, a name which I did not use as a pseudonym for my person, and a name that was only used as a pen name by Mr. Starobin for the product of his literary collaboration with me.

I want to repeat that it is not true that I came to this country as a so-called agent of the Communist International. The Communist International was dissolved 1943 in form

and in fact. The Communist International was never an illegal organization and does not exist as an illegal organization now. The Communist International during the time of its existence spoke very openly before the whole world—too openly in the opinion of its adversaries. It never made a secret of its policy and decisions. Exactly in order to be able to function openly and not underground, Moscow was chosen as headquarters for the Communist International. The choice of Moscow, however, did not make the Communist International an instrument of the Soviet state, anymore than the choice of the United States as headquarters for the United Nations makes this organization an instrument of the American state.

Communist Party Not a Conspiracy

A Communist party is not a conspiracy. It acts in the open and makes no secret of its adherence to an international organization of the workers. On the contrary, it defends such affiliation against all attacks and explains the reasons for it. If such a party ends its affiliation it states the reasons publicly. Only where reaction makes open political work impossible by suppressing all civil liberties, does a Communist party go underground. Under Himmler nobody was fool enough to stand up to be counted as a Communist in order to make it easier for the Gestapo to find him out, to torture and to kill him, and to deprive his family of all means of existence. To make this still clearer I will give you another example. If, for instance, Mr. Rankin were to order the Negroes in Georgia, who I am sure are very hostile toward the barbarian theory and practice of the white supremacy doctrine, to stand up to be counted, they would do this only if they were sure that to stand up did not mean to be lynched.

Of course, in all such cases the time finally comes when the suppressed and persecuted stand up not to be counted, but to beat their suppressors and persecutors. And history decides usually who is counting whom: the American

colonists the British, or the British the American colonists; the Northern armies the slave-holders, or the slave-holders the Northern armies; the Nazis the Russians, or the Russians the Nazis; the Japanese aggressors the Americans, or the Americans the Japanese aggressors; the Thomas-Rankin Committee the progressives, or the progressives the Thomas-Rankin Committee, and so on.

On the Character of Expert Witnesses

I think it would not be bad, even if you don't like Marxists and Communists, to really know what they stand for, especially if you think about persecuting them. In such cases it is better to go to the sources than to the turncoats. Nobody would have asked Benedict Arnold to be a specialist of the ideas of the American revolution and to write its history. Nobody should ask a fanatical Mohammedan if he wants to learn the truth about Christianity. Nobody who wants to know the truth about Communists should listen to a Budenz.

The dissolution of the Communist International was not a trick but a real dissolution. It was dissolved by all the Communist parties in the world which belonged to it at that time. It was not done in order to satisfy or appease the eternal Red-baiters for they never will be satisfied or appeased; they will only be beaten. It was done to facilitate co-operation between the different parties of the working class and all progressive elements in the fight against fascism and reaction. I repeat, whatever Budenz says, the Communist International does not exist anymore. And I am sure, if in time to come the parties of the working class should decide to create a new International, it would be done in the open, before the whole world, with a program known to everyone; before the eyes of the workers and not behind their backs; not in secret, not with so-called agents and bosses and other kinds of mystery men *a la* Hollywood, police brains and stool-pigeons. Personally I hope, if such a new International should come about, it will not be anymore only a Communist International, an Interna-

tional with only Communist parties, but an International of united working class parties of every land in the world.

I think I have given you all the facts pertaining to my case. That means I have given you a clear negative answer to the question whether I am a foreign agent, a spy, the "boss" of all the Reds in this country, as some idiots have asserted. There is nothing essential I left out.

I am fully conscious of the fact that I had to speak under oath. And therefore I tried to speak to the best of my knowledge.

"Let Me Go Back in Peace"

If you have listened to me without too much bias, you will stop persecuting me and let me go in peace where I came from. Germany needs every anti-fascist in the fight for the creation of a new, peaceful, democratic Germany.

In order to save you time when it comes to questioning I shall tell you what I am not going to answer:

First: With the exception of Mr. Joseph Starobin, who gave me permission to reveal our literary agreement, I shall not mention any names. Not the name of a friend, and not the name of even a casual acquaintance of mine, not even the name of my laundryman. No American shall, because he knows me, become an object for blacklists, smear campaigns and slanders. This is a point of honor with me. We German Communists always considered scoundrels those who helped reaction make life miserable for anyone.

Second: I do not think I am already so old that I have to write or tell my memoirs. If it comes to it I shall not forget you. But at present I shall not give you in detail my biography and my activities in the fight against reaction during my lifetime. After all, this fight is not over yet. I do not consider you as my fathers confessor. I don't trust reactionaries. But I have told you everything pertaining to the accusations directed against me. Nothing essential in this regard is missing.

It is enough for you to know that I am since my youth a

German Communist, and that all my activities were connected with the fight against German imperialism and guided by the necessities and complicated conditions of this fight.

Gentlemen, if some of you didn't like what I said I cannot help it. But in a fight you don't cry about pulled hair. I didn't cry either. He who fights Reds will sometimes get red in the face.

That is all.

February 6, 1947.

CIVIL RIGHTS CONGRESS

205 East 42nd Street
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I want to help in the defense of Gerhart Eisler and the abolition of the Thomas-Rankin House Committee. My contribution for \$..... is enclosed.

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Gerhart Eisler's persecution is your concern. By creating a "red" phobia in the minds of the American people, the Thomas Rankin Committee sets the stage for its announced all-out attack on organized labor, the educational system, radio and the movie industries.

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