

Speech by Dalton Trumbo
(Presented at A.S.P. membership meeting - Sept. 17, 1947)

I am here tonight as a representative of the most investigated industry in the United States---an industry against which only one demagogic voice in Congress need be raised ~~and~~ to make the American press roar and thunder for days upon end. The ~~the~~ ^{of Hollywood} Congressional ~~and~~ investigations have persisted steadily and viciously over a period of almost ten years. During this period there have been other industries more richly meriting the attention of investigating committees---industries ~~which~~ ^{which} manufactured faulty equipment ~~which~~ ^{which} cost the lives of hundreds of Americans during the war; industries which have conspired to defraud the government on ~~war~~ contracts; industries which have sold poisonous and adulterated products to the population; industries which presently conspire a new kind of grand theft against men and women everywhere by insisting upon profits so fabulous that ~~inflation~~ ~~the~~ ~~costs~~ ~~of~~ ~~food~~ ~~and~~ ~~general~~ ~~living~~ ~~have~~ ~~risen~~ ~~beyond~~ ~~any~~ ~~index~~ ~~point~~ ~~in~~ ~~our~~ ~~history~~.

5 espies

True, there have been occasional murmurs in the press when a fraud has been discovered, a dangerous drug misadvertised, or a coal mine ~~has~~ ^{has} exploded through criminal negligence and killed several score workers. But such incidents are recorded and quickly forgotten. The campaign of reaction against my industry continues undiminished and vigorous throughout the years. That is because my industry---the motion picture industry---deals in ideas. And ideas can be dangerous, especially if they are ideas which look forward rather than backward. Indeed, we live in a time when any idea is dangerous; when, to use the words of a distinguished colleague, Mr. James Kevin McGuinness of the Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American ideals, we must not touch the minds of our audience at all. Mr. McGuinness ranks ~~in~~ ^{stands} Hollywood as the

altogether in its ~~frustrated~~ attempt to escape condemnation.

of such sterile
~~And~~ When that is accomplished ~~the~~ pictures will be ~~shown~~
content that the industry will be bankrupted at home and discredited throughout the world. *Clearly, then, it is our obligation to maintain its right to free expression.*

The present ^{in America} committee doesn't hesitate to use ~~methods~~ outright intimidation in its investigation. It's whole purpose is to make people ~~scared~~ *afraid* for example, to be in such a place as this tonight. Recently two agents of the committee appeared at a local recording company with a demand that they be permitted to listen to the recording of Miss Katherine Hepburn's Wallace speech and take a transcript of it. They were permitted to do so. But remember, recordings of this speech are on sale ^{at stores} /all over Los Angeles. Tens of thousands of copies of it have been printed in pamphlet form. The committee itself possessed ~~the~~ a copy of the speech. Why, then, *I* did the committee's investigators take the trouble to go to the recording company? The reason is very clear. To intimidate the recording company. To intimidate Miss Hepburn. To intimidate you.

Henry Steele Commager, professor of history at Columbia University, has written an article in the September issue of Harper's magazine, in which he discusses the new concept of American loyalty, as defined by the various government tests and the UnAmerican committee. He concludes that this new loyalty is, beyond anything else, conformity. If you don't conform, you are ~~arbitrarily~~ arbitrarily cast out. I quote from him: *(there is, the new standard loyalty)* "It is the uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of America as it is---the political institutions, the social relationships, the economic practices. It rejects inquiry into the race question or socialized medicine, or public

housing, or into the wisdom or validity of our foreign policy. It regards as particularly heinous any challenge to what is called 'the system of free enterprise', identifying that system with Americanism. It abandons evolution, repudiates the once popular concept of progress, and regards America as a finished product, perfect and complete. . . . It is satisfied with membership in respectable organizations, and, as it assumes that every member of a liberal organization is a Communist, concludes ~~tg~~ that every member of a conservative one is a true American."] end quote

Apropos of this, ~~to learn~~ I think it will interest you all ^{to learn} that a county employee was recently discharged ~~from~~ ~~his~~ under the new loyalty proceedings. ~~at~~ The crime which cost him his ~~job~~ ^{license} was membership in the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts Scientists and Professions. ~~If~~ If this makes you shudder, consider the ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~case~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~late~~ ~~actor~~ ~~John~~ ~~Barrymore~~ ~~who~~ ~~was~~ ~~sentenced~~ ~~to~~ ~~three~~ ~~years~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Federal~~ ~~Penitentiary~~ ~~for~~ ~~his~~ ~~work~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Joint~~ ~~Anti-Fascist~~ ~~Refugee~~ ~~Committee~~; or the case of Carl Marzani who resigned from the OSS after four years of wartime service, ~~and~~ ~~entered~~ ~~the~~ ~~film~~ ~~business~~ ~~and~~ ~~made~~ ~~a~~ ~~film~~ ~~entitled~~ ~~'The~~ ~~16-mm~~ ~~motion~~ ~~picture~~ ~~for~~ ~~union~~ ~~educational~~ ~~work~~. ^{As a carbon copier and he} ~~he~~ ~~was~~ ~~arrested~~, ~~tried~~ ~~and~~ ~~sentenced~~ ~~to~~ ~~three~~ ~~years~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Federal~~ ~~Penitentiary~~. Does it remind you of other artists . . . in other countries . . . at other times?

A necessary corrolary of the campaign to conform, the campaign against thought itself, ~~has~~ the campaign of ~~the~~ ~~nationalist~~ ~~self-glorification~~. We are not only the ~~the~~ ~~best~~ ~~country~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~, but we are also the smartest and our young men are the strongest

can make no boasts for our literature. It has been, with few exceptions, ^{almost} completely ^{captioned} ~~sterilized~~ by the new American myth and its other face, the new American inquisition.

~~And~~ ^{And why?} ^{Because we have not} where has our leadership in motion pictures gone? It has gone to England and to Italy. ~~And~~ ^{present the ideas which are contained in these super} ~~the ideas which are contained in these super~~ ^{beings} ~~foreign pictures~~ ^{foreign pictures} For all our national boastings, our painting ~~has~~ no comparison with the art of occupied and ruined France, just as our music lags far behind the brilliant contributions of the Russians. Well . . . perhaps that isn't important. ~~We~~ ~~still~~ ~~have~~ ~~our~~ "know how". We still have our scientists, didn't we make the bomb?

And there, of course, the answer is that we aren't so good on science either. And we never have been. The bomb itself was principally based upon the work of foreigners--- non-Americans, if you please, outlanders and phillistines. In chemistry ^{Americans} ~~we~~ have captured ^{only} six Nobel prizes out of 43. In physics---and physics is very important to the bomb---we have won 8 prizes out of 39. In medicine and physiology we have won 6 prizes out of 37. In other words, we ~~have~~ are now and we have always been far more dependent upon the scientific discoveries of non-Americans than they have been upon us. Dr. Harold Urey testified before the Senate Subcommittee on War Mobilization that: "The relatively small number of Nobel prizes awarded to the United States indicates the weakness of this country in pure science and also, by contrast, its great strength in industrial development. We have improved our ~~technical and industrial developments~~ scientific position during the past 25 years but all through our history we have drawn on Europe for fundamental science. Our technical and industrial developments are the

8

offspring of this important fundamental science."
~~Remembering that such a weakness might be fatal in~~
~~case of war,~~ what ^{can} we think of the spectacle of our
 government deliberately imprisoning science, impeding the
 free flow of scientific information, compartmentalizing science
 within our own boundaries, invoking such hideous penalties
 upon ~~xx~~ careless or injudicious scientists that many of them
 refuse government service as too perilous. Meanwhile the
 Thomas Committee harries the Federation of Atomic Scientists
 as subversive . . . and the very basis of our ~~progress~~
 scientific progress is hedged in with restrictions which
 narrow its range from day to day.

All of this is the result of the new intellectual terror
 and the new American myth. ~~And it results~~
 not only ~~the~~ ^{also in} persecution of individuals but the
 corruption and enslavement of our art, our literature,
 our science and our ~~very~~ ^{total} culture. It reaches in all
 directions to stultify the creative and to strike down
 the critical. ~~Its inquisitorial striking force is~~
 directed by by a man named J. Parnell Thomas and his colleague,
 the Honorable James A. Rankin from the ^{cultural} ~~malarial~~
 swamps of ^{the state of} Mississippi.

What can we do about it? There are many things, of
 course. It is a defense of our freedom which merits ~~xxxxxxxx~~
~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ all the time we can give it as in-
 dividuals, and all the pressures we can exert as an organization.
 Certainly every person here ~~should~~ tonight can fill
 out the petitions ^{to abolish the Rankin bill} ~~which have been prepared~~. These become
 your immediate, your personal protest. We ~~have~~ ^{are} also published
 in a set of pamphlets the excellent material delivered at

the Thought Control Conference held ~~xxx~~ this summer. They represent a brilliant and comprehensive analysis of what is happening to ~~AMERICAN~~ our whole society under the blows of reaction. I ^{will} value my set of these pamphlets as I would value a gun---they ^{will} provide ~~with~~ the ammunition ~~xxxxxx~~ with which to defend myself and to convince others. The Conference at which they were read was so successful that a nationwide conference is to be held in N.Y. on October 25-26, under the chairmanship of Dr. Harlow Shapley of Harvard University, and under the sponsorship of a Committee of one Thousand distinguished American men and women. ^{I urge you must strong order these} ~~Why not buy the pamphlets, if only to give to a friend who has not seen the peril to himself which comes against him as well as against you.~~ ~~from the nation-wide drive against free thought and free culture.~~ ^{you understand that the peril is directed} ~~And~~ there are many other things which can be done---too many for me to enumerate and too many for any one person to accomplish. But the time is very short. The attack has been effective. It proposes to continue until it stands alone in victory---until no one dares to ~~xxxxxx~~ teach, to investigate, to write, to paint, to speak or even to think. In Germany we have condemned an entire nation and its people for willingness to permit the passage of ~~undemocratic~~ undemocratic decrees and wicked laws. I think that condemnation is just. Let us ^{therefore} ~~take~~ ~~the~~ ~~steps~~ ~~are~~ ~~shapley~~ take immediate and urgent measures to make certain that the ~~people~~ people of the United States shall never be charged with the same ~~criminal~~ crime---the most terrible crime that can be charged to ^{any} a nation or ~~any~~ individual---the crime of having permitted it to happen.