

come in Hollywood, through Hollywood, and with a picture designed to capture an American audience. If I were you, I would not be inclined to sacrifice dough in return for my name on a European picture. If you were not required to sacrifice money to get your name on such a picture, then I'd say by all means do it. It cannot fail to be a plus. It simply will not be the decisive plus that I think may presently lie within your grasp.

This brings me to the Kazan matter. As you perhaps know, I feel much less strongly about informers than you do. I don't press my view upon you because I think yours is wrong; I loathe the bastards as much as you do. But I do not give them the importance that your loathing gives them. In other words, I regard them as complete nonentities, whose successes do not trouble me, and whose failures don't especially delight me. I just plain don't give a damn about them, one way or the other. I think that if we are truly out to break the blacklist, we cannot allow ourselves the luxury of moral feelings when such feelings might have a practical effect upon our own careers. For example you suggested that you thought there was a possibility that you could make a trade with Sam; i.e., you would accept Kazan, and Sam would accept your name on the film. I think this would be a triumphant conclusion, both morally and practically. Similarly, if your refusal to work with K should compel you to give up the project altogether, I think this would be immoral and impractical. The moral end is for you to receive credit for your work and a fair price for it. If you allow your revulsion against an informer to jeopardize that moral end, I think you're wrong. From my point of view, in every such instance the rule would be this: who will be advantaged most? I think if you make a good old-fashioned Yankee horse-trade - his stool-pigeon for your name - you advantage yourself, and thereby you advantage all of us. If you can make such a horse-trade, and refuse to do it out of moral feelings, then I believe you advantage the informers and the blacklisters. We must not let these informers affect us so powerfully as to prevent us from achieving our end. To do so is to give them a power they actually do not possess, and an importance which is altogether exaggerated. However, you're a moody black Irishman and a powerful hater, and I daresay you will do as you God-damn please. So be it, and blessings.

Now let me get down to this little union of three called Wilson, Maltz, and Trumbo. I think our minimum objective should be for each to establish a pseudonym which he will then use on all of his films, and for that pseudonym ultimately to be openly identified with the man himself and his real name. The maximum objective would be, of course, to use our own names from the outset. I think very soon we three shall be able to undertake what amounts to a strike, using the weapon of our excellence: no name, no work. Albert agrees with this. He has one or two big ones (I don't know what they are) and he is going to move in that direction. I think you should too.

Now let me give you, in great confidence, a situation which is developing in relation to me. As you may or may not know, I have done the screenplay on "Spartacus". It's costing six million dollars, and stars Kirk Douglas, Tony Curtis, Laurence Olivier, Peter Ustanov, Charles Laughton, Jean Simmons, Nina Foch, John Gavin, and a bunch of others. For this job I am receiving seventy-five thousand dollars and five per cent of the picture. Eddie Lewis is executive vice-president of Bryna, which is producing the picture with Universal money for Universal release. Eddie Lewis has, of necessity, pretended to be the

author of the script. He is a thoroughly decent man, loathes the idea of taking screen credit, and will, I believe, do everything he can to avoid such credit. He feels that the secret will be impossible to keep, and that he, who will have done a heroic job as producer, will have that job besmirched by the fact that he has taken the credit on the script which everyone will know does not belong to him.

The attorney for Bryna was a man named Sam Norton, of the firm of Rosenthal and Norton. Sam Norton is a talker. As early as last June, word seeped out of his law firm that I was doing "Spartacus". It reached, to my certain knowledge, Ilse Lahn, John Wexley, David Miller, and perhaps half-a-dozen others. About two months ago, Sam Norton was abruptly discharged for what I understand were financial irregularities. The result of his enmity with Bryna has been that he has told everybody in town who the author of "Spartacus" is.

During the latter time of preparing the script I worked with Anthony Mann, who was the director, as well as with Kirk and Eddie. Anthony Mann two weeks ago brought Peter Ustanov to the house for a conference. It lasted all day and ended with drink and hilarity. Three days later Tony was fired from the picture. It had nothing to do with the Ustanov visit, but with disagreements as to the quality of his direction. Tony has naturally revealed to a good many people that I am the script writer. Not only that, but all during the autumn, when he was asked who was really doing the script, by casual acquaintances, he would reply "I can't tell you", which is scarcely the way to keep in-violate a trade secret.

The next development was, of course, that Ustanov told Olivier, and that Olivier then wanted to come over and talk about his part. This was arranged by Eddie and Kirk, and last Sunday occurred a repetition of the Ustanov scene beginning at two in the afternoon and ending, somewhat in the cups, about nine-thirty. In addition to this, Lou Wasserman, president of MCA and the most powerful single person in the business, knows that I have written the screenplay, and actually has been negotiating for the moneys from UI which ultimately reached me. Others at MCA also know the secret, if one can call it that. In fact, the only people in town who do not know the identity of the author are the two chief executives at UI.

The picture still has four and a half months to go. It is the focus of a great deal of publicity. It is inconceivable to me that a secret so open at the present time will not be much more open by the time the picture is finished, particularly when two of the people who know the secret have every conceivable motive for revealing it. I think it not at all unlikely that the credit for this picture will fall to me or to my pseudonym like a ripe fig. I doubt that by the time credits are to be determined there will be found one person in Hollywood who will be willing to let his name go on the film. Hence I stand a chance of inheritance by default.

Running parallel to this is another situation, which is equally confidential. Some time ago I wrote a two-hundred-and-sixty page script called "Montezuma". John Huston is going to direct it. The budget will be in excess of five million dollars. Lou Wasserman is handling this script, and Lou knows that I have written it. John knows that I have written it, and we have had conferences together about it. Kirk Douglas has read it and is ready to make a deal to star in it, along *with*

Rock Hudson. Universal badly wants a Douglas-Hudson picture, and this would probably be it. I have already tentatively informed Bryna that I shall probably demand at least my own pseudonym on the script of "Montezuma". Since I still control the script, and control every aspect of its final disposition, I think that I will be able to put the pseudonym across - if not my own name. Now the point is that at a certain time perhaps three months from now or five months from now when Spartacus is nearing completion, and Montezuma is in the first stages of practical preparation, I intend to make a frank power play. Depending upon the circumstances of personal honor and so forth, I am going to go on strike; I'm going to demand my name on both pictures - and if not my name then the same pseudonym on both which will be identified with me. The tremendous leakage on Spartacus, for which I am in no way responsible, will be of great assistance to me. I don't say that I shall be successful in pulling this little coup off, but the chances are considerably better than they ever were before. And this, like a good many other breaks in the blackmarket, may at any moment be determined by sheer accident, or by the unanticipated act of one of the many other persons who know the secret. Anyhow, I am prepared to roll with any punch, and I certainly propose to present in the strongest possible way the position that it is morally wrong, and downright stupid in terms of public relations, for me to be denied credit on these pictures.

Now again, as these affairs develop, things will be developing with you, and they will be developing with Albert. We should keep in touch with each other, because my knowledge for example of what you are going to do or have done, can be used as a weapon here for me to do what I wish to do. Similarly with Albert.

This letter is so ungodly long, because I've dictated it, some of my judgments in the general situation may be wrong, but I think most of them are right. I'd like very much to hear what you feel, and what you think the possibilities are from your point of view. I promise to be a better correspondent than I have been, and to notify you instantly of anything which may have bearing on our tri-partite alliance. But I think the key line is in guerilla warfare, the almost unscrupulous use of our only weapon (which is our excellence), and highly individual tactics as each man slashes for an opening. I am sending you a few clippings which may help you in evaluating the new situation which I feel exists in this town and in the country generally. Much love to Zelma and her two pixies.

Oh - I almost forgot. De Laurentis was in touch with me a week ago and wants me to do "Bolivar" based upon a script which he hopes to have ready two months from now. Full of windy plans about moving us all to Europe, and so forth. Since it was my impression that you were doing "Bolivar" I want to know whether this encroaches upon your territory. There is another little ethical problem involved, since Jack and Mitch have been doing a very unsuccessful treatment of "Bolivar" for Bryna. I believe that plan has now been dropped altogether. But I'd like to know your status in this particular matter. I don't think I'll have time to take de Laurentis on, but if I do, how does he react to money problems? I mentioned the price on "Spartacus"; for "Montezuma" I'm getting ninety-three thousand and six-and-a-quarter per cent. Is de Laurentis prepared to speak in manly figures, or does he take a more thrifty approach?

Salud!