

NARRATION FOR A DOCUMENTARY RECORDING OF THE  
VISIT OF THE HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES  
COMMITTEE TO SAN FRANCISCO ON MAY 12, 13, 14, 1960

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OK  
Mar 1 - Tiger  
2 - Kitch



SOUND: READING OF FIRST AMENDMENT - ECHOED SLIGHTLY

Sound: Committee go home/

SOUND  
UNDER  
NARRATION  
ABOLISH THE  
COMMITTEE  
(SONG)

① Narr: On May 12, 13, 14, 1960, students from the colleges and universities of the San Francisco Bay Area staged an impressive and widely publicized protest against the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Here, on tapes made on the spot by a local radio station, and in the words and voices of many of the participants and organizers, is the story of that protest.

~~Sound: Committee go home~~

② Narr: Two weeks before the Committee was scheduled to arrive, a group of students on the Berkeley campus of the University of California met, as they had met the year before when many of California's teachers had received subpoenas from this same Committee. It was a small group, ~~636~~ 5 in number, composed of the leadership of existing, recognized campus organizations. They constituted themselves a committee, <sup>the</sup> Students for Civil Liberties, for the express purpose of protesting the visit of the House Un-American Activities Committee to the Bay Area. Their first meeting was held on \_\_\_\_; <sup>DURING THE FOLLOWING TWO WEEKS.</sup> subsequent meetings were held on \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. ~~At none of these meetings were there representatives of any outside organizations, political or civic.~~ This group, <sup>The students for civil liberties,</sup> decided to circulate a petition asking the Committee not to hold its hearings in San Francisco, and to organize a mass protest meeting in Union Square, followed by a picket of the city hall.



followed by a storm of the city hall.

organized a mass protest meeting in Union Square,

and to hold the meetings in San Francisco, and to

decide to circulate a petition against the committee

and to organize a boycott of state. This group

of these meetings were these representatives of the

unpleasant meetings were held on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. At home

the day after. Their first meeting was held on \_\_\_\_\_.

After of the House Un-American Activities Committee to

investigate for the express purpose of broadcasting the

conspired premises a committee, students for state

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and persons from this same committee. It was a small group

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the University of California met, as they had met the last

night, a group of students on the Berkeley campus of

May: two weeks before the committee was scheduled to

conduct committee to some

to the school of the protest.

words and voices of many of the participants and organizers,

times made on the spot by a local radio station, and to the

House Committee on Un-American Activities. Here, on

impulsive and highly dramatized protest against the

and participation of the San Francisco Bay Area school in

May: on May 12, 13, 14, 1950, students from the colleges

going: committee to some

conduct committee to some



(2)

~~THE~~  
~~But~~ STUDENTS FELT THAT

^ Past performances and present philosophy of the committee had made its purposes, defamation, guilt by association, and the public pillory, clear enough to the student group. Nothing was so Un-American as this inquisitorial group, nothein<sup>1</sup> was such a threat to the very principles upon which this democracy was founded than a committee of congress which persecuted for beliefs and associations, rather than prosecuting for unlawful acts. A man must answer to society for what he does, they thought. Not for what he believes.

- ① Narr: Inspired perhaps by the sit-in movement in the south, that expression of growing belief among the youth of this nation that direct action is one effective avenue to a sometimes remote and inaccessible government, the Union Square rally and the mass picketing of city hall were successfully planned and held by the Students for Civil Liberties. A careful liason with the law enforcement agencies was maintained; the san Francisco Police department was informed of the plans a week in advance; thus they were apprised of both the demonstrations and of the group responsible for their organization. Listen to the testimony of ~~the~~ San Francisco Chief of Police Thomas Cahill, <sup>testifying</sup> ~~testifying~~ before the house subcommittee.

Sound: Cahill

- ② At the rally, two California State assemblymen and a cannon of the episcop<sup>al</sup> church addressed the assembled students and other spectators, numbering over a thousand. They asked for the abolition of the House Committee of ~~A~~ Un-American Activities, wick representative James Roosevelt, in a speech before the lower house, had <sup>termed</sup> ~~called~~ "an agent of folly and weakness". ① From Union Square, and in full co-operation



with the police, the group marched to city hall and set up the picket line, which was to swell at one point in the three day hearings to three thousand souls. The line was monitored by volunteers from the student community who sought to preserve order and to maintain contact with law enforcement so that a minimum of friction might develop. They passed out a mimeographed sheet, entitled "Picket Line Procedure", prepared by the Students for Civil Liberties. Here is a quotation from that sheet.

~~NOTE:~~ Narr: All persons who participate in this line are expected to show good will and to be polite, calm, and reasonable to everyone, including the police, hecklers, the public, and other picketers. Do not show anger and do not use abusive language; do not respond to hoots, jeers, or derogatory language. Do not debate with the public....Monitors are in charge of maintaining the order of the picket line and you are expected to follow their directions. If you cannot abide by the decisions of the monitors, if you cannot remain non-violent in character and in deed, please withdraw quietly from the line...Remember, your conduct must reflect the ideals for which we are demonstrating."

② Narr: On the first day of the hearings Congressman Willis from Louisiana described the committee's purpose.

Sound: Willis' opening remarks







① Narr: Bu other people had different views on the committee's activities.

Sound: Pastiche

② To this sort of charge Mr. Willis replys.

Sound: Willis' by-product speech.

② Narr: <sup>Now</sup> ~~But~~ listen to the words of Justice Black of the United States Supreme Court, ~~referring to the House Committee on un-American Activities~~

~~VOICE!~~ Sound: Narrator reads: "The chief aim, purpose, and practice of the House un-American Activities Committee, as disclosed by its many reports, is to try witnesses and punish them because they are or have been Communists or because they refuse to admit or deny Communist affiliations. The punishment imposed is generally punishment by humiliation and public shame. There is nothing strange or novel about this punishment. It is in fact one of the oldest forms of governmental punishment known to mankind; branding, the pillory, ostracism and subjection to public hatred being but a few examples of it."

② Narr: and listen to the committee itself, as it went on record, perhaps in an unguarded moment, in the House Reporter number 1, the first session of the 77th Congress:

~~VOICE!~~ Narr: "This committee ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~only~~ ~~agency~~ ~~of~~ is the only agency of



congress with the power of exposure. There are many phases of un-American activities that cannot be reached by legislative or administrative action. We believe that the Committee has shown that...fearless exposure... is the answer.

Sound: Willis (assemble legislative facts)

② Narr: Said Mr. Willis. But this is difficult to reconcile with "fearless exposure" of areas which "cannot be reached by legislative...action"

① Narr: The hearings began as scheduled, and ran their usual course. Friendly witnesses chanted their answers as though they had them memorized, the familiar ritual of political absolution, although occasionally the apparently well-rehearsed performance broke down. Listen to this exchange between committee interrogator Richard Arens and friendly witness Carl Prussian:

Sound: (irrevocably bit)

① Something less than spontaneous, it seems. Later in the testimony of this witness, in an apparent appeal for the sympathy of the American public, the committee crossed the traditional line which has always separated the church and the state.

Sound: mother's knee



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① Narr: Mr. Prussian answered no.

② Narr: As usual, the friendly witnesses were absolved of political guilt through the ritual of naming of names - the names of former associates, names which in any event since this particular witness was a long time member were already available to the committee. The purpose of of the FBI the public reiteration of those names in an open hearing needs no comment.

Narr: The unfriendly witnesses levelled charges at the committee

① If the committee is really concerned with assembling facts that might lead to legislation, why all the attention to the publicity value of the proceedings? Nearly all of the important business of this society, from merger negotiations to murder investigations, is conducted in private. Can you imagine the police interrogating you concerning an alleged crime, and inviting to the proceedings your neighbors, the press, and the American Legion? The publicity value for the committee is obvious; being anti-communist never hurt anyone on election day, and the Committee's appropriation has been regularly approved by <sup>the</sup> Congress. But what about the effect of publicity for the subpoenaed witnesses? Listen to this interview of a spectator at the hearings, recorded by a KPFA reporter:

RADIO STATION

Sound: Legionaire (wow)



② Narr: The unfriendly witnesses levelled charges at the committee regarding its purpose, its means, and its questionable legitimacy in the face of the first amendment to the constitution

Sound: William Mandel

Crowd  
noise  
under

① Narr: Meanwhile, in the rotunda outside the doors of the supervisors chamber, where the hearings were held, a tense situation was developing. Although the hearings had been advertised as open to the public, it was discovered by the students that they were more open to a certain segment of the public who were the recipients of the ~~now~~ special notorious "white card" ~~x~~ special ~~signature~~ invitations to the proceedings bearing the ~~imprimatur~~ of the committee's chief investigator, William A. Wheeler. This confused the issue somewhat, and certainly the white card issue was responsible for much of the misunderstanding between the police and the student demonstrators. ② The first day of the hearings passed, and at each reconvening ~~of the hearing~~ progressively fewer students were admitted. Outside, a massive, well-ordered picket line ringed the City Hall. Inside, the students loudly protested the committee, and now protested a second and more immediate grievance; the policy of the committee to keep out of ~~it~~ its hearings all those who were opposed to its views. But the students reminded the chairman that invitation cards or no, they were still there.



Sound: Legionnaire (wow)

Narr 2: The unfriendly witnesses levelled charges at the committee regarding its purpose, its means and its questionable legitimacy in the face of the first ammendment to the constitution.

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Sound: Mr. Willis, we're still here.

① Narr: Friday came, the second day of the hearings, and once again the pickets turned out to trudge the sidewalks around city hall. Once again a line formed in front of the hearing room doors, once again preferential treatment went to the white card-bearing friends of the committee. Shortly after 11 o'clock the following exchange took place between the students and Sherriff Carbury of San Francisco County.

→ 7d

Sound: White-Carbury exchange.

② Narr: Disturbing the courts, the sherriff had said. But his words reached only a few of a large and constantly changing crowd. Some of those who did hear him felt that still there were two issues involved; one the disturbance of the municipal courts, the other the usurpation of the constitutional rights of the citizens of the United States. It was at best a difficult position to be in. Why indeed, if Thursday's demonstration had been tolerated, was this identical demonstration of Friday not permitted? But the stage had been set; the exchange you have just heard was the last communication to the demonstrators by the law enforcement agencies. Despite testimony to the contrary, the fire hosing of the afternoon of Friday the thirteenth, and the subsequent action by the police came without warning or order to disperse. The last word to them from ~~law enforcement~~



law enforcement had been

Sound: "You may stay here until 2 o'clock (Carbury)

*Will be  
here all  
day*

① Narr: The sheriff had promised a redress of their grievance, a promise that he was perhaps powerless to fulfill. The students took the promise in good faith and upheld their end of the bargain; they were silent when the committee recessed for lunch.

② Narr: After the noon recess of the committee, the students once again lined up before the hearing room doors. One of them, an English student observing the processes of American government, describes the scene.

Sound: Chris Bacon

*✓*  
*P1101*



\* [

Narr 1: The sheriff had promised a redress of their grievance, a promise that he was perhaps powerless to fulfill. The students took the promise in good faith and upheld their end of the bargain; they were silent when the committee recessed for lunch. ]\*

Narr 2: After the noon recess of the committee, the students once again lined up before the hearing room doors. One of them, an English student observing the processes of American government, describes the scene.

Sound: Chris Bacon *to Fred Haines*

\* [

Narr 1: And so, the incident of Friday, May thirteenth, 1960 ended. 64 were arrested on charges of inciting to riot, disturbing the peace, and resisting arrest. Chief of Police Cahill gave the police version of the incident: ]\*

Sound: Cahill

\* [

Narr 1: Not one of the more than 200 witnesses can place the incident of which the chief speaks. One of the arrested demonstrators, a high school student, in an interview with Ernest Lowe of radio station KPFA, gave a version of the incident with which virtually all of the demonstrators and eyewitnesses agreed: ]\*

Sound: Lowe-HS student

\* [

Narr 1: Later in the same interview, Lowe put the important



(10)  
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Sound: Lowe - HS Student

① Narr: Later in the same interview, Lowe put the important question:

Sound: Lowe - HS Student.

② Another eye-witness, whose sincerity cannot be questioned, was interviewed on the scene by KPFA's Fred Haines:

Sound: Haines - Dierup

② Narr: All the other student demonstrators and witnesses, with the exception of the police department, could recall no warning to the students, no order to disperse immediately prior to the use of the fire hoses.



Narr: Who gave the order for the use of the hoses?  
Students ask the mayor and the chief of police.

Sound: Mayor - student interview

Narr: Mr. Willis, too, was not present

after lunch  
Narr: Just prior  
to the hosing,  
two co-chairmen  
of SCL tried to  
establish  
contact with  
law enforcement  
officials, contact  
which had  
existed all the  
previous day  
and all that  
morning. At  
this crucial  
point, unexplainedly  
they could not  
make that  
contact.  
The Mayor was  
out of town,  
the Chief was  
not in, and  
the Sheriff,  
who had said  
> sound

Sound: Eating lunch

Narr: For a while, it looked as though no one new who  
gave the order, ~~to turn on the hoses~~ ~~at the scene~~  
the officer in charge, it was later  
determined, was Inspector McGuire of the San Francisco  
police force. ~~Earlier in the day he had addressed~~  
himself to a student with something less than reserve;

Sound: McGuire

Narr: The ~~remark~~ <sup>final</sup> ~~in case you missed it~~, was "Open  
your mouth once more and I'll throw you out personally".

Mr. McGuire was later asked to testify before the house  
subcommittee, but in that testimony he, the one official  
witness present at the beginning of the incident, was  
not asked how that incident started. Instead, Chief  
Cahill, who was not present, was asked. ~~Thus the evidence~~ <sup>was this perhaps because</sup>  
presented was hearsay, and the possibility of its being  
consequently ~~xxx~~ <sup>probably</sup> perjurial was/avoided? ~~Perhaps~~ we shall never know.

was not available,  
it was later  
revealed that  
the sheriff, the only  
official who indicated  
any understanding of  
the student position,  
was speaking to the  
committee regarding  
their admissions policy,

if he had ~~made~~ returned before 1:15 the whole  
incident might never have occurred. But he did not.







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That these students knew, and the police surely must have known, that the moment of maximum tension would occur when the doors were opened for the afternoon session, and the bargain with the sheriff would be put to the test. The mayor was out of town; the chief of police was not in, and the ~~sheriff was not in~~, and the sheriff, who had said

Sound: Carbury

Narr 2: The sheriff was not available. It was later revealed that the sheriff, the only official who had indicated any understanding of the student position, was speaking to the committee regarding their admissions policy. Students felt that if he had returned before 1:15, the whole incident might never have occurred.

\* Narr 1: They insisted that they did not want and did not precipitate violence, and that if they had been ordered to leave under pain of arrest or simply arrested, they would have submitted to that arrest. The chance, however, was not offered them. ] \*

Sound: No warning to disperse (Lowe-HS Student)

Narr 2: For a while, it looked as though no one knew who gave the order to turn on the hoses. The officer in charge, it was later determined, was Inspector Mc Guire of the San Francisco police force. Mr McGuire was later asked to testify before the house subcommittee, but in that testimony he, the one official witness present at the beginning of the incident



B  
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\* Narr 1: The next day, Saturday, May 14, 5,000 people gathered at San Francisco City Hall; the block on which it was situated was completely ringed by a double line of pickets. Their signs called for the abolition of the committee, and indicated shock and indignation at the police action of the previous day. One picketer wore a raincoat, and carried, instead of a sign, a large umbrella.

*\* Mand cut here*  
Narr 2: Conflicting reports of the incidents of the previous day filled the press and the air like shrapnel; the committee charged that the demonstrations were communist inspired and directed, and moved swiftly to cover its own tracks, and those of the police department. Mr. Arens questioned the star witness, Mr. Prussian.

Sound: Prussian

Narr 2: The communist press, said Mr. Prussian. Here is a quotation from the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle, hardly a communist organ, of May 14, 1960 on the newsstands at the very time Mr. Prussian was speaking.

Voice: "Then from nowhere appeared a third officer. He ran up to the slender boy firmly held by the other two officers and clubbed him three times on the head. You could hear the hollow smack of the club striking. The boy went limp and was carried out."



Narr 2: and Reporter Mel Wax, in the New York Post of May 15, 1960.

Voice: "I saw it happen. Never, in 20 years as a reporter, have I seen such brutality. San Francisco Police hurled women down the staircase, spines bumping on each marble stair. I saw one woman dragged through glass from a broken front door pane. Two big cops seized a thin, gray suited student from the University of California. One held him while the other hit him, again and again, in the stomach."

\* Narr 1: Charges against the students, all save one, whose case is still before the courts, were dropped. That student is charged with the alleged action which precipitated the hosing; the action which no one can recall, the action about which the committee failed to question Police Inspector McGuire. Petitions to the Attorney General asking a grand jury investigation of the incident, and supporting the student position, were signed by professors from the University of California, Stanford University, San Francisco State College, and other Bay Area colleges. Many organizations came to the support of the students. Here is the resolution of the California Federation of Teachers: ] \*

Voice: "Whereas traditionally students have been in the forefront of the defense of civil liberty, even at great personal risk, as recent events in Hungary, Turkey, and Korea have clearly shown, and



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Here is the resolution of the California Federation of teachers:

✓ Sound Reading of that document

Through all the conflicting reports and testimonies the students steadfastly maintained that they had been misled by no one, that the charge of communist manipulation was completely untrue. They maintained that they had done nothing to prompt the police a sweep, what they termed the excessive police action, and that their subsequent resistance had been passive. After the incident occurred there were isolated instances of other than passive resistance, but at that point it was a little late to prove provocation. by that time these instances could



Whereas the non-violent protest of students of the Bay area colleges against the existence and conduct of the House Un-American Activities Committee are an assertion of this traditional role,

Therefore the California State Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, welcomes and heartily endorses these protests against the Committee, and publicly thanks the college students of the Bay Area for their dedication, and for the courage to protest even in the face of brutal and unjustifiable coercion and arrest,

And it hereby constitutes itself a fund-raising body to aid students arrested while engaged in non-violent defense of our civil liberty."

Narr 2: Through all the conflicting reports and testimonies the students steadfastly maintained that they had been misled by no one, that the charge of communist manipulation was completely untrue. They maintained that they had done nothing to prompt the excessive police action, and that their subsequent resistance had been passive. After the incident started there were isolated instances of other than passive resistance, but by that time these instances could hardly be said to have provoked the police action.

Narr 1: Upon their dismissal, the students issued the following statement, here read by a local broadcaster:

Sound: Rich



① ~~The~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~trig~~ <sup>over</sup> controversy of the demonstrations of May 12, 13, & 14<sup>th</sup> continues. The Mayor of San Francisco indicated to the press that he would prefer that the committee, should it schedule any future trips to San Francisco, would use the federal building for its hearings where the army could protect it. The committee was quick to respond. They said that they were surprised at the words of Mayor Christopher "but not too surprised".

And so the familiar pattern of injustice continues. do the students oppose the committee ~~when~~ Why were the students demonstrating? ~~fasted~~ ~~many~~ Perhaps the words of justice Black best express their feelings.

Sound - Randall Ascent

Sound - Mr. Willes, We've still  
here up through,



*Mint*

Narr 1: The controversy over the demonstrations of May 12, 13, and 14, continues. The Mayor of San Francisco indicated to the press that he would prefer that the committee, should it schedule any future trips to San Francisco, would use the federal building for its hearings, where the army could protect it. The committee was quick to respond. They said that they were surprised at the words of Mayor Christopher "but not too surprised."

And so the familiar pattern of innuendo continues. Why do the students oppose the committee? Perhaps the words of Justice Black best express their feelings.

Voice: "...the Court today fails to see what is here for all to see--that exposure and punishment is the aim of this Committee and the reason for its existence. To deny this aim is to ignore the Committee's own claims and the reports it has issued ever since it was established. I cannot believe that the nature of our judicial office required us to be so blind, and must conclude that the Un-American Activities Committee's "Identification" and "exposure" of Communists and suspected Communists, like the activities of the Committee in Kilbourn v. Thompson, amount to an encroachment on the judiciary which bodes ill for the liberties of the people of this land.

Ultimately all the questions in this case really boil down to one-whether we as a people will try fearfully and futilely



futilely to preserve Democracy by adopting totalitarian methods, or whether in accordance with our traditions and our Constitution we will have the confidence and courage to be free,"

Sound: Mr. Willis, we're still here.