

**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**  
**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION**  
**COVER SHEET**

**SUBJECT: JAMES FRANCIS CAGNEY**

**FILE: 100-HQ-2279**

[REDACTED] **B7C**

August 23, 1940

**JAMES GAGNEY**

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 11-6-80 BY SP-10/100

Summary  
8/24/40  
1-1303

On August 15, 1940, testifying before  
an extraordinary session of the Los Angeles County Grand Jury  
investigating the slaying of John R. Riley, stated

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**B7C**  
**B7D**

COPIES DESTROYED 3/11/58  
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100-2279-1  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
6 SEP 25 1940  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
1587 FIVE

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B7C

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In April 1937 it was reported that Errol Flynn, the screen actor, had made a trip to Valencia, Spain, at which time he made the following public statement:

"The mission which brings us to Spain is imposed upon us by our condition of free men. For six months a great uneasiness has been felt in Hollywood for this Republican Spain so cordially threatened. We bring \$1,500,000 which we have collected among various artists (Frederic March, James Cagney, Donald Woods, myself, etc.) and the working personnel of the various studios."

In July 1937 Cagney was one of the sponsors for the Abraham Lincoln Battalion and the George Washington Battalion of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

According to an item appearing in the Federated Press for September 30, 1937, James Cagney, together with other leading movie actors and actresses, contributed to the ambulances for Loyalist Spain.

In September 1937 it was confidentially disclosed that James Cagney makes donations directly to the headquarters of the Communist Party in New York City. It was at that time also reported confidentially that Cagney was one of the principal contributors to a financial campaign being conducted by the Western Worker, a daily newspaper, the official organ of the Communist Party for the West Coast.

In October 1937 Cagney was reported to be one of the sponsors for the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

Ivan Francis Cox, former San Francisco Secretary-Treasurer of the International Longshoremen's Association, in a damage action against the Communist Party of the District of California and numerous other defendants, named Frederic March as:

"a leader in an asserted Communist plot to dominate the western United States, reaching into the California schools, government offices and the motion picture industry."

In this same action Cox charged March with being a Communist and associated with him in the Communist movement allegedly are:

James Cagney  
Franchot Tombs  
Lionel Stander  
Wilhelm Dieterle  
Mary Astor  
Jean Muir

In August 1938 it was confidentially reported that James Cagney, together with numerous other movie luminaries, was making liberal contributions to Loyalist Spain.

In September 1938 it was confidentially reported that Cagney was paying \$100 a month for dues to the Communist Party with an assessment of \$400 every four months.

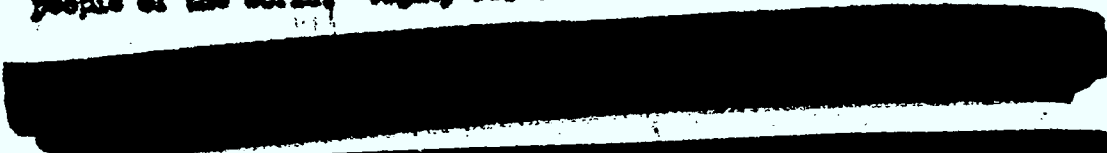
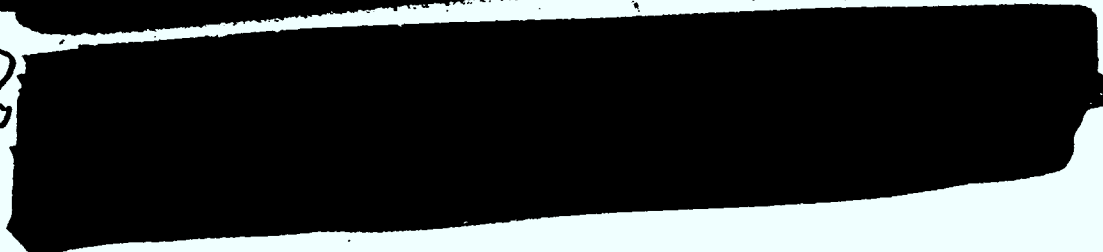
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The Daily Record for January 18, 1939, carried a news item to the effect that 56 Hollywood luminaries had drawn up a petition addressed to the President of the United States, calling upon him to place an embargo on all German-made goods until such time as Hitler should cease his aggression against smaller nations and against the people of the world. Cagney was one of the signers of this petition.

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**Film Front**

# Cagney Bows to House Un-Americans

By David Platt

Some additional information has come to light on the movie of Saroyan's *The Time Of Your Life* which James Cagney and his brother are producing in Hollywood. The whole story pieced together from letters that we have received from the coast is as follows:

At the recent PCA 'thought-control' conference in Los Angeles, Paul Draper, the dancer, charged that the Cagneys had wilfully distorted the meaning of one line in the play and had deleted another line "because of the Thomas-Rankin Committee investigation."

Draper, who has a part in the picture, said he was ordered to substitute the name Stalin for Hitler in a line reading "who is Hitler—he can't push me around."

When the dancer objected, it was suggested as a compromise, that Molotov's name be substituted.

Several days later, however, Draper ran into Sidney Bernstein, the British film executive associated with J. Arthur Rank's enterprises. Bernstein informed him that his organization would refuse to handle a film which had a line in it offensive to the Soviet Union. He said further that if *The Time Of Your Life* was released with either the name of Stalin or Molotov in it, it would do practically no business anywhere in Europe.

Draper reported the conversation to the Cagneys. A second compromise was the result. The line was ordered changed to read: "Who is Kilroy—he can't push me around." This was a retreat into pure and simple nonsense. "A proper substitute," my informant writes, "would have been a contemporary reactionary or fascist, as was intended in the original Saroyan version written when Hitler was still in power."



JAMES CAGNEY

There's more to the story. The Cagneys are tough—tough in the wrong sense of the word—and don't give up easily. They made the Kilroy version but they made the Molotov version too: Kilroy for Europe and England—Molotov—if they can get away with it—for America.

On top of that they deleted the line "I haven't the heart to be a heel so I'm a worker" which appears in the Saroyan play. When Draper asked the producers about this, he was assured that the House Un-Americans would regard with suspicion any Hollywood film in which the word 'worker' appears.

This is the road back—the road to disaster. At the end of it is a rigidly controlled screen art-controlled, as Adrian Scott, producer of *Crossfire*, observes in the current issue of *Screen Writer*, by "committees which in pretending to defend, actually subvert our democratic way."

The alternative which Scott recommends to his fellow producers is to give the American people what they have always wanted and today more than ever want. And that is, "pictures which touch their lives, illuminate them, bring understanding."

Scott warns the picture-makers: "If we retreat now, because of our own doubts, not only do we do a great disservice to the American audience, but we do a most profound disservice to ourselves. For this Fear we've become accustomed to—this adjustment we have made to taboos—are the allies of the Thomas Committee, the Tenney Committee, and their stooges within and without the industry."

He adds: "While this marriage of reaction is going on, we've got to speak now—or we'll be forced to forever hold our peace."

RECORDED

INDEXED 100-2279-A

This is a clipping from  
Page 11 of the  
DAILY WORKER

Date 8-15-47  
Clipped at the Seat of  
Government.

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Letter to Director  
NY

Attached is a blind memorandum dictated by [REDACTED] and containing all the pertinent information concerning the subject which [REDACTED] could presently recollect. b7D  
b7C

The original of each memo has been reviewed by [REDACTED] has made any necessary corrections [REDACTED] has signed the original. The signed original of each memo is being retained in the confidential informant file of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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SUMMARY OF FILE REFERENCES

Main file No: 100-2279

Date: Dec. 20, 1950

Subject: James Cagney

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

Searched As:

Date Searched: 10/2  
10/9  
12/16

James Cagney  
Jimmie Cagney  
Jimmy Cagney  
J. Cagney  
Cne Cagney

#229,752

CLASSIFIED BY: *Sp/Ag/deg*  
DECLASSIFY ON: 11-6-86

OADR

Found As:

James Cagney  
Jimmie Cagney  
Jimmy Cagney

This summary includes material obtained from a review of all "See" references identified with the subject. All references which are identical or probably identical have been included. Possible identical references, that is, those references where there is insufficient data to reject or include the references, have been listed at the end of this summary.

*Copies of Consultation*  
*personally filed as Encl*  
2/1/51  
B7C  
REVIEWERS

Supervisor

RECORDED - 51

100-2279-3  
JAN 10 1951  
Approved

2CC:Internal Security

55 JAN 26 1951

INDEXED - 51  
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BACKGROUND AND MAIN FILE SUMMARY

According to Who's Who, James Cagney was born in New York City, on July 17, 1904, (He testified at a hearing in California that [REDACTED] He began his stage career in 1924, and has worked in motion pictures since 1931. He has starred in numerous motion pictures since that time.

LEGISLATIVE  
RECORD

A review of Bureau references reflect the following information concerning Cagney:

He was President of the Screen Actors Guild in 1942 and 1943.

Allegations have been made that Cagney was associated with the following organizations:

Communist Party (Member and contributor)  
Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (Sponsor and Contributor)  
National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners (Member and contributor)  
American Peace Mobilization (Member)  
Contemporary Theatre, Inc. (Sponsor)  
American Students Union (Contributor)  
Medical Bureau to Aid Spanish Democracy (Sponsor and contributor)  
Hollywood Anti-Nazi League (Contributor)  
"Soviet Russia Today" (Contributor)  
American Youth for Democracy (Contributor)  
New Theatre League (Sponsor)  
Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions (Sponsor)  
Hollywood Writers Mobilization (Sponsor)

Cagney's main file contains [REDACTED]

According to testimony given by [REDACTED] before a Los Angeles, California, Grand Jury.

According to [REDACTED]

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100-2279

SI 100-119-14X1 (2)

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On two occasions in 1946, Cagney was described as a victim in receipt of extortion letters. Bureau investigation revealed that the senders of the letters were mentally unbalanced individuals and no prosecutions were authorized.

9-11282; 9-14593

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Volume 26 of "Who's Who in America", 1950-1951 contained the following information concerning Cagney:

"James Cagney, actor; born New York City July 17, 1904; education grammar school; left high school to go to work; married Frances Vernon, 1922. Began in vaudeville, 1924; worked in motion pictures since 1931; has appeared in many pictures among which were 'Public Enemy', 'Ceiling Zero', 'Greasy Guy', 'Something to Sing About', 'Boy Meets Girl', 'Angels with Dirty Faces', 'Each Dawn I Die', 'Roaring Twenties', 'The Fighting 69th', 'The Strawberry Blonde', 'The Bride Comes C.O.D.', 'Captains of the Clouds', 'Yankee Doodle Dandee.' Received 'best male actor of 1942' award from critic's circle for his acting in 'Yankee Doodle Dandee'. Vice-President Cagney Productions since 1942. Films they have since released through United Artists are 'Johnny Come Lately', 'Blood on the Sun', and 'The Time of Your Life.'"

Source as given.

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The "New Theater" of April 1934, advertised a motion picture costume ball to be presented by the Film and Photo League on April 27 (probably 1934), at Webster Hall, 119 East 11th Street, New York City. James Cagney was listed as one of the sponsors of this ball. According to the advertisement tickets could be obtained at the Film and Photo League, 12 East 17th Street; "New Masses", 31 East 27th Street; Workers Book Shop, 50 East 13th Street; "New Theater," 5 East 19th Street; Gotham Book Shop, 51 West 47th Street.

Source as given.  
Page 727.

A letter dated September 10, 1948, signed by Robert Taylor, Executive Secretary, Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, addressed to "Dear Friend", announced that an open membership meeting of the "Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade" would be held on September 14 in the Detroit Room of the Detroit-Leland Hotel.

According to the letter the meeting would include the showing of the film "America's Lafayettes", containing some excellent scenes of the Lincoln Brigade men in action. It announced that one of the volunteers who had recently arrived from Spain would speak. The letterhead contained the names of the national officers and sponsors of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Included in the list of sponsors was the name James Cagney.

Original source not shown.  
Page 753.

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Hearings of the Special Committee  
on Un-American Activities (date  
not shown)  
Page 755.

Dies Committee report, Section II,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Sub-sections "Film and  
Photo Organization as  
Communist Fronts" and  
"Friends of the Abraham  
Lincoln Brigade".  
61-7582-1298  
(6)

SI D.-C. R. Vol. 13 p. 7728  
(10)

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A copy of a newspaper article dated Friday, February 23, 1934 indicated that James Cagney was to be the auctioneer at an auction being held on February 28, 1934 at the Women's City Club of San Francisco under the auspices of the "National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners". Lincoln Steffens was the national chairman of this Committee, and Ella Winter, was among those acting as patrons, hosts and hostesses. The exhibition was for the defense fund of the Scottsboro case.

Original Source not shown. p.65

B7C

[REDACTED]

Highly Confidential Source p.87

B7D

[REDACTED]

Highly Confidential Source. p.129

Albany rpt. dated April 11, 1944

Ent: [REDACTED] was; Internal  
Security-C"

(9)

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SAC Dunn of Los Angeles advised the Bureau that on April 15, 1935, the Warner Brothers Company had wired Mr. Keenan and other officials of the Department of Justice, inviting them to preview the picture, "G-Men", starring James Cagney, before its release. The Collector of Customs in Los Angeles, who was connected with the Warner Brothers Company, said that he had received word from Warner Brothers that the picture would not be released until Mr. Hoover saw it.

Source as given.  
Memorandum from Mr. Tolson  
to the Director dated 4-16-35.  
80-7-164  
(11)

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The April 27, 1935 issue of the San Francisco "Chronicle", carried an article written by Katherine Hill. The article announced that the picture, "G-Men", had opened on the previous day at the Warfield Theater with James Cagney as its star. It said that the picture was the gangster theme in reverse, inasmuch as the heroes were the Department of Justice men. Hill said that the picture removed all pretense of glamour from the public enemy, but still managed to create hugely effective entertainment, all on the right side of the law. The article stated that the picture showed how fingerprints are matched, and how the telltale markings on ammunition are checked. It also reveals a part, at least, of the machinery by means of which "cool headed, carefully trained men are able to outguess hoodlums".

The picture gives Cagney, a former public enemy number one, a new role as a two-fisted Government Agent operating against criminals. The article continues, giving a resume of the story depicted in the picture.

San Francisco "Chronicle"  
dated April 27, 1935.  
80-7-181  
(11)

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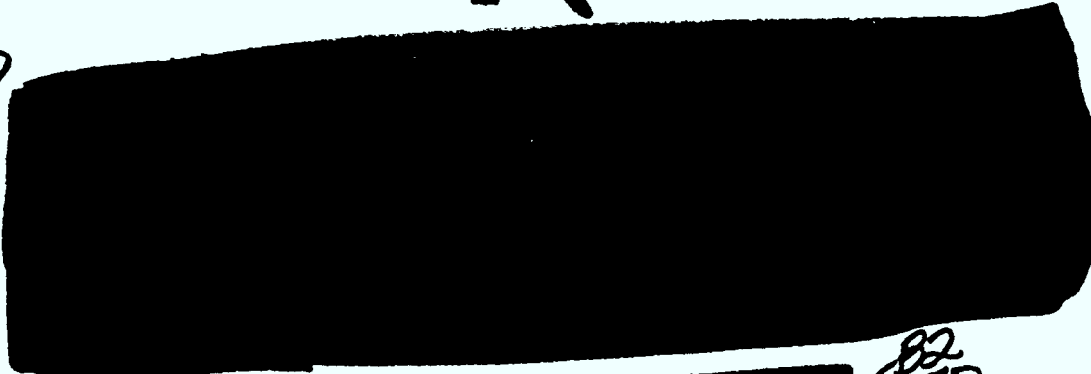
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pp. 12 + 13 of 100-2279-3

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James Cagney, actor, a member of the American Peace Mobilization and a fellow traveler who followed the Communist Party line, was listed as one of those in Hollywood connected with the motion picture industry who was affiliated with or supported the activities of the New Theatre League.

Source not shown, p. 105

James Cagney, actor and a Communist Party line follower, was listed as a Hollywood sponsor of Contemporary Theatre, Inc.

Source not shown, p. 109

Los Angeles, rpt. dated 2-18-43  
Re: "Communist Infiltration of  
the Motion Picture Industry -  
Internal Security-C"  
100-138754-4  
(4)

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pages 15 & 16 of 100-2279-3

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On May 9, 1936, James Cagney was one of a group of individuals who took a special tour through the Bureau. The tour was conducted by [REDACTED] of the Publications Section.

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B6

At the conclusion of the tour Mr. Cagney stated that it was very surprising and that the work of this Bureau was more thorough than he had realized. He further stated that he thoroughly enjoyed his trip through the Bureau and requested that his thanks be conveyed to the Director for the courtesy shown.

R. E. Joseph Memo for Mr.  
Tolson dated May 12, 1936.  
66-1631-10-2109  
(12)

SI 66-4760-77  
(11)

SI 66-4760-82  
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The Philadelphia files contained information to the effect that James Cagney, prominent motion picture actor, had made substantial financial contributions to the Student Union in Los Angeles, California in 1936.

Original source not shown.  
Philadelphia Report dated  
1-24-41,  
Re: "American Student Union;  
IS - R."  
61-7497-36  
(7)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The October 5, 1936 issue of the "Daily Worker" listed James Cagney as one of a number of Hollywood screen stars who had raised funds to aid the Salinas Lettuce Strikers. The article also stated that Cagney, Pat O'Brien, Chester Morris, and Edward Arnold marched with the actors' delegates in the Los Angeles Labor Day parade.

Source as given.

Memorandum from P. B. Hood,  
SAC, Los Angeles dated 5-9-42,  
Re: "[REDACTED] IS - C." **B7C**

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

In 1937 James Cigney was a supporter of the "Medical Bureau to Aid Spanish Democracy", 391 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

Circular dated Jan.-Dec., 1937  
Re: "Medical Bureau to Aid Spanish  
Democracy"  
Los Angeles rpt. dated March 12, 1941,  
Re: "North American Spanish Aid  
Committee; Internal Security-C"  
100-7058-50  
(5)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

James Cagney was a sponsor for the Los Angeles Chapter of the "North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy" in 1937.

A weekly organizational bulletin of the "North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy" dated May 19, 1937, page 50.  
Milwaukee rpt. dated May 19, 1941  
Re: "North American Spanish Aid Committee; Internal Security-R"  
100-7058-62, P. 56  
(6)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Information was received from an anonymous outside source to the effect that James Cagney was one of a group of individuals who had contributed freely to Communistic movements.

Anonymous outside source.  
Blind Memorandum dated 5-6-37,  
Re: "Movie Strike"  
6-0-11  
(12)

~~REDACTED~~ B7C

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In 1937 the name of James Cagney appeared on the letterhead of the "Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade" stationery. Cagney was listed as a sponsor of this organization.

An anonymous informant of  
G-2.  
San Fran. letter to the Director  
dated Nov. 5, 1937.  
61-7559-2004  
(8)

SI 100-3-3191 encl. p. 25  
(9)

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*During the Spanish Civil War James Cagney,  
in conjunction with Edward G. Robinson and Melvyn  
Douglas, presented an ambulance to the Loyalists.*

Original source not shown

Los Angeles report dated 2-3-45  
Re: "Edward G. Robinson"  
Internal Security (R)  
100-337779-38, page 2  
(3)

SI 100-337779-1, page 3  
(9)

SI 61-7561-216X59  
(5)

SI 61-9218-18  
(G - 2)  
(4)

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The "Federated Press" of September 30, 1937, listed 15 leading movie actors and actresses who had signed their names to two ambulances for Spain. It stated that these ambulances would accompany the "Heart For Spain" in its cross-country tour. The name of James Cagney appeared on the list of 15 actors and actresses.

Source as given.  
61-7559-1867  
(8)

 370

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

B7D

B2  
B7D

B2  
B7D

A letter on the stationery of the "Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Rehabilitation Fund, Incorporated," Chicago, Illinois, included a list of sponsors. Included on this list was the name James Cagney.

Original source not shown.  
Chicago report dated February 1, 1941, entitled, "Veterans of Abraham Lincoln Brigade; Internal Security - C" 100-7060-24 (7)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

S I D. C. R. Vol. p. 7729 (10)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

On September 20, 1937, there was made available to the San Francisco Office a copy of a confidential memorandum prepared by [REDACTED] (no further *B7C* identification). The memorandum is quoted in part as follows: "Jimmy Durante is a Party member and joined in New York and the same obtains for Jimmy Cagney, who makes his donations to the Executive Committee direct in New York. [REDACTED] *B7C*

[REDACTED]

*B2*

San Fran. letter to the Director dated Sept. 24, 1937, Re: "Subversive Activities - General." 61-7559-2122 (13)

[REDACTED] *B7C*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The December 10, 1937 issue of the "San Francisco Chronicle" carried an article announcing that Ivan Cox, deposed Secretary-Treasurer of the I.L.A., filed a \$5,100,000 damage suit in local superior court on December 9, 1937, against a long list of defendants, charging conspiracy. With regard to the movie industry, Cox charged that defendant March had used his film salary "by guile and perversion of friendship" to interest his friends in Communistic principals. He listed as Communists among others, James Cagney, Franchot Tone, Mary Astor and Jean Muir.

Source as stated.  
61-7559-2128  
(8)

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ b7c

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The case of Ivan Francis Cox vs. the Thirteenth District of the Communist Party was filed in Superior Court in San Francisco, California, on December 8, 1937. The plaintiff, Cox, on page twenty of his complaint for conspiracy informed that he believed that the defendant, Frederic March, and a group of individuals including James Cagney, had all collected and contributed large sums of money for the purpose of making the official Communist Party newspaper "The Western Worker" into a daily paper as of January 1, 1938. He further informed that the raising of these sums "is by various devices and artifices, including the payment of sums of money to an attorney by the name of Lawrence Beilensen with offices at 1124 Title Guaranty Building, Los Angeles, California, who in turn diverts such sums into Communist Party channels for the general use of the said Communist Party."

Records of the Circuit Clerk's Office  
City Hall, San Francisco  
San Francisco rpt. dated July 5, 1949  
Ent. [REDACTED] b7c  
Security Matter-C"  
[REDACTED]

(6)

SI 61-7559-2133X14  
("Our Sunday Visitor", 1/ 9/38)  
(8)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

B7C The Bureau received the following letter from [redacted] dated March 30, 1938 at Hollywood, California: "Dear Mr. Hoover: While a great deal of [redacted] outbreak is bunk, nevertheless the Red charge is serious. Cagney has been charged with contributing to Communistic causes twice and March once. Neither has publically denied these accusations."

Source as given.

[redacted]  
(5)

B7C It should be noted that [redacted] had declared that he was communicating with the Director to demand an investigation of "Reds and Communists" among the screen's headliners.

[redacted]

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The name of James Cagney appeared on a list of actors contributing to Loyalist Spain. The list was dated August 8, 1938.

Source unknown.

61-7561-227  
(8)

 B7C

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Edward F. Sullivan, Special Investigator for the Dies Congressional Committee, advised about August 18, 1938, that James Cagney and other film stars had contributed to the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy during a drive by the Spanish Government to raise money for medical facilities.

New York Journal American, 8/18/38  
61-7582-9X3  
(4)

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The August 23, 1958, issue of the "Washington Herald" carried an article stating that six of the brightest stars in Hollywood were named on the previous day before the House Committee investigating Un-American activities as the unwitting dupes of Communists spreading subversive propaganda for the overthrow of democracy.

The six, named by Doctor Joseph B. Matthews, former Communist "fellow traveler" were: Clark Gable, Robert Taylor, James Cagney, Miriam Hopkins, Bette Davis and Shirley Temple.

According to the article, Matthews said "No one I hope, is going to claim that anyone of these persons in particular is a Communist. The unfortunate fact, however, remains that most of them unwittingly serve, albeit in a slight way, the purposes of the Communist Party. Their names have definite propaganda value which the Party is quick to exploit."

The six movie stars were named by Matthews to substantiate his contention that the Communist Party relied heavily upon the carelessness or indifference of thousands of prominent citizens in lending their names for propaganda purposes.

Source as given.  
61-7582-11X2  
(4)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

In September, 1938, the San Francisco Office received information to the effect that James Cagney had been paying \$100 a month for dues (Communist Party) with an assessment of \$400 every four months. It was stated that the contribution was made in such a way that by the time a check or the money reached the Party, it would be difficult to locate the origin.

 **B2**  
San Fran. letter to the  
Director dated Sept. 10, 1938,  
Re: "Subversive Activities,  
General."  
61-7559-3136  
(5)

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The December 31, 1938 issue of "People's World" carried pictures of Robert Montgomery, Virginia Bruce, Melvyn Douglas, Miriam Hopkins, James Cagney, Gale Sondergaard, Luise Rainer, Eddie Cantor, Gloria Stuart, and Sylvia Sydney. The article beneath these pictures is quoted as follows: "Pictured above are ten of the score or more of Hollywood highlights who greatly aided the cause of progress during the last year, thus proving that they have brains as well as beauty, social consciousness along with sex appeal. Most outstanding was Melvyn Douglas who associated himself with every campaign to aid democracy and fight Fascism. These stars recognized that unionization is the greatest protection workers can have, even such high salary workers as they are. Consequently, many of them have worked tirelessly in strengthening the powerful Screen Actors Guild. They have also shown their sympathy publicly and often for Loyalist Spain and have generously contributed money and talent for her aid. They have worked to impose the boycott on Japanese goods, and have been prominent in anti-Nazi activities. Many of them belong to the Motion Picture Democratic Committee which played an important part in the victorious election which quashed long entrenched reaction in California. On the day before Christmas these stars and others gave a widely publicized party for the migrant agricultural workers at Shafter--publicized not to enhance their own glamor, but to draw the attention of the nation to this portion of the ill-housed, ill-clothed, and ill-fed.

"In 1938 the film industry reached a new low in the production of inept, dull and worthless pictures but the honor of Hollywood was greatly advanced by the work of these screen personalities who had the courage to join in the fight against all that big money and monopolistic interests stand for".

Source as given:  
61-7561-254X20  
(5)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

In Chapter 24 of the Book, "The Red Decide", the author, Eugene Lyons, stated that Herbert Biberman was credited with the lead role in the creation of a new Declaration of Independence in 1938. The author describes this declaration as follows: "The Declaration called for nothing less than the immediate breach of all economic relations with Germany. Nearly all Hollywood clamored for the honor of signing, for the most part neither knowing nor caring that it was at bottom another Communist fund raising and propaganda stunt. Unluckily only 50 had signed the original document in 1938, wherefore no more could endorse the new one." The author then listed the names of the persons signing the Declaration. Included on this list was the name of James Cagney.

Source as given  
Los Angeles letter to the Director  
dated Dec. 4, 1941.

Re: [REDACTED] **B7C**  
[REDACTED] Internal Security-R"

100-24497-66

(2)

[REDACTED] **B7C**  
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

In the "Minneapolis Tribune" of January 1, 1939 there appeared a picture of the "Hollywood Committee of 56", composed of picture stars, producers, and directors. The purpose of this committee was to send to President Roosevelt and Congress a petition signed by 2,000,000 American citizens seeking a severance of economic relations with Nazi Germany. James Cagney was pictured as a member of this committee.

[REDACTED]

Source: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(1)

B7D

B7C

[REDACTED] B7C

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The 5th Congress for Peace and Democracy was held from January 6 to January 8, 1939, at Washington, D.C. A representative of the "Hollywood Committee of 56" described to the Congress how 56 film stars, actors and producers had drawn up this petition, addressed to the President of the United States, calling upon him to place an embargo on all German made goods until such time as Hitler would cease his aggression against smaller nations and against the peace of the world.

Included among the signers of this petition was James Cagney.

"Daily Record" Jan. 18, 1939,  
61-7559-3506X2  
(5)

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On October 7, 1939, the Chicago Office saw a mimeographed copy of a letter dated June 21, 1939, addressed by Major Frank Rogers, Executive Secretary of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Rehabilitation Fund, Inc., 108 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois, addressed to all I.W.O. Lodges. This letter thanked the members of the IWO for their pledge to raise \$1,000 for the Disabled Veterans Brigade.

A list of the sponsors of the Friends of Abraham Lincoln Brigade was printed on this letter. Included on this list was the name James Cagney.

Source not shown.  
Chicago report, 10-12-39,  
Re: "International Workers  
Order, Subversive Activities."  
61-7559-4982  
(10)

SI 100-7060-60 p.6  
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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

B7C

On June 17, 1940, [REDACTED]  
Santa Monica, California, submitted to the Los Angeles  
Office a list of 14 persons reported to have made un-  
American statements. The name of James Cagney appeared  
on this list.

Source as given.  
Los Angeles letter to Mr. Hill  
dated July 16, 1940, a copy  
of which was furnished to the  
Bureau.  
61-7559-9921  
(4)

The file does not furnish any further information  
with regard to the un-American statements allegedly made  
by the 14 individuals. The Los Angeles letter merely  
acknowledges receipt of the letter of June 17, 1940.

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B7C

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The August 21, 1940, issue of the "Washington Times Herald" carried an article stating that Chairman Martin Dies, of the House Committee investigating un-American activities, said that day, that James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, and Frederic March, were not and never had been sympathetic with the Communist movement.

Dies made the announcement a few minutes after concluding a hearing with Cagney, who flew to San Francisco from Massachusetts to deny charges previously filed with Dies. The article stated that Cagney, supported by 50 World War veterans who rallied to his aid under the leadership of past State Commander William Wilson, of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, said he had been questioned by Dies about various contributions he had made during recent years "including money I gave to aid women and children in the Salinas lettuce strike and other San Joaquin Valley strikes."

Cagney said that he had always ignored charges of Communism as ridiculous but that he was going to clear up the matter once and for all. Cagney said that he told Dies of contributions of money and services to the Motion Picture Relief Fund, the Hollywood Guild, the Scottsboro Boys Defense Fund, Community Chest "and other organizations whose work I have never considered un-American."

Source as given.  
100-119-A

(#)

SI 100-119-A, "New York Times"  
8-21-40.  
(11)

SI 100-119-11 N. Y. Times 8/20/40  
(1)

SI 100-119-11 Wash Daily News 8/20/40  
(1)

SI 61-7582-A- Wash. Evening Star 8/20/40  
(14)

SI 100-119-11X Wash. City News 8/20/40  
(5)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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The August 22, 1940, issue of the "Washington Times Herald" carried the column entitled "Little Old New York" by Ed Sullivan. In his column Sullivan printed an interview with James Cagney concerning the charge that Cagney was a Communist. In the interview Cagney told Sullivan that he had never been a Communist, a Nazi sympathizer or a Fascist sympathizer. He described himself as a liberal Democrat and said that he was planning on voting for President Roosevelt. Concerning the charges made against him, Cagney said that they resulted from a donation that he made to aid the wives and children of the men who were on strike in the San Joaquin Valley. He said that it was charged that he gave the money because he was a Communist. The interview took place in New York City and Cagney stated that he was flying to San Francisco to see Chairman Dies.

Source as given.  
100-119-A  
(11)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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Buron Fitts, District Attorney of Los Angeles County, brought a former Communist organizer before the Los Angeles County Grand Jury who testified as to the Communist Party affiliations of motion picture actors James Cagney, Humphrey Bogart, and Fredric March, which testimony was highly publicized in the newspapers on the Pacific Coast.

Subsequent thereto Congressman Martin Dies issued a press release stating that he believed these individuals were patriotic Americans and had been in no way affiliated with the Communist Party.

B7D  
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(Dates of the above occurrences were not set forth).  
Original source not stated.  
Los Angeles letter to the Director dated Sept. 3, 1940.  
100-119-13  
(5)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

B7C [redacted] whose reliability was unknown, forwarded a letter to the Bureau dated September 16, 1940, wherein he commented that he had at a previous time commented on Representative Dies' charges against James Cagney. He stated he was thinking of a few years previous when in 1933 [redacted] was working as [redacted] in California and Mr. Cagney gave a few dollars to help unfortunate people like himself. He pointed out that Cagney as a result of this monetary contribution had been labeled a Red. [redacted] also forwarded a letter to the Bureau dated September 14, 1940, which was copy of a letter he had sent to Honorable Robert LaFollett, United States Senate, wherein he pointed out substantially the same as mentioned above.

Letter from [redacted]  
to the Director dated 9-16-40

[redacted]  
(4)

[redacted]  
(10)

B7C  
[redacted]  
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On June 15, 1942, [REDACTED] of the War Department, stated that his main assignment was the promoting of the Army Emergency Relief. He said that he had been receiving all sorts of propositions, and that one recent proposition was that if the FBI would permit the use of the name of the organization and if the Director's name could be attached to a motion picture which would be produced, that this would make considerable money for Army Relief. B7C

[REDACTED] did not say from whom the proposition had come but stated that the director of the picture would be Clarence Brown and that James Cagney would play the lead.

Memo from L. B. Nichols to  
Mr. Tolson dated June 15, 1942,  
62-69557-2  
(7)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

B7C In August of 1942, [REDACTED], an Agent in New York City, advised that she was attempting to have a picture made based on the activities of the FBI. She said that the proceeds from this picture would go to Army and Navy Relief. [REDACTED] said that her agent on the West Coast, [REDACTED] wanted James Cagney to play the leading role in this picture and take the part of Mr. Hoover.

Interview of [REDACTED]  
conducted by New York Agents  
on August 5, 1942.  
New York letter to the Director  
dated August 7, 1942, Re:  
[REDACTED]

(6)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The September 29, 1942 issue of the "Washington Times Herald" announced that on September 28, 1942 James Cagney took office as President of the "Screen Actors Guild", succeeding Edward Arnold.

Source as given.  
100-157201-1  
(11)

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pages 83 + 84 of 100-2279-3

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On November 16, 1942, the Los Angeles Office advised that Kenneth Thompson, former executive secretary of the Screen Actors Guild in Hollywood, had recently gone from Los Angeles, California to Washington, D. C. with James Cagney. Apparently the trip was to confer with officials of the War Activities Board relative to furnishing entertainment to the Army.

Original source not shown  
Los Angeles letter to the Director  
dated Nov. 16, 1942,

Re: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Internal Security-C, custody  
detention"

(4)

[REDACTED] B7C  
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The December 1942, issue of "Current Biography" furnished the following information concerning James Cagney:

He was born in New York City on July 17, 1904, the son of James Cagney and Carolyn Nelson Cagney. His father owned a saloon at 8th Street and Avenue D, a neighborhood that was known to policemen as the gorilla jungle.

He went to grammar school and after being graduated entered Stuyvesant High School. During the next four years he had the following jobs: Office boy for the "New York Sun", bundle wrapper at Wanamakers, page boy at the "Friars" in New York City and custodian of the Webster Branch of the New York Public Library.

Interested in becoming an artist, he entered Columbia University. When family reverses forced him to leave he looked around for a way to make money and chose the stage. He became a chorus boy in the musical comedy "Pitter Patter". He continued as a chorus boy for 32 weeks. When the show closed he went into a vaudeville sketch playing a part in Jewish dialect. During the next seven years he toured all of the tank towns in the East. He returned to the legitimate stage in 1925, but a short time later went back to vaudeville. In 1929 he and Joan Blondell went with Warner Brothers.

Occasionally accused of Communist activities because of a tendency to help those more unfortunate than himself, Jimmy squelched these rumors thoroughly and officially when he appeared before the Dies Committee in 1940. Touring in Massachusetts when the charges of subversive activity came up Jimmy went to Washington to defend himself. The charges seemed to be primarily the result of his having donated an ambulance to the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, fighting for the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War, and his frequent contributions to the relief of starving cotton pickers when they were striking. He explained it all by his impulsiveness in responding to requests for aid. Dies cleared him with the announcement that in his opinion Mr. Cagney was not and never had been sympathetic with the Communist movement but had let his name be used by Communist front organizations.

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1

[REDACTED]

Cagney was described as being 5 feet 9 inches tall, weighing 155 pounds. He was married to Frances Vernon, a former professional actress who gave up acting after her marriage. His sister Jean is a starlet with Paramount Pictures; two of his brothers are physicians; and William, his brother is President of Cagney Productions.

Source as stated.  
94-3-4-1115-15  
(12)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

James Cagney was elected president of the "Screen Actors Guild" for 1944. He was also president of this organization in 1943. B2

Confidential Informant [REDACTED]  
Los Angeles rpt. dated Feb. 12, 1944,  
Re: "Communist Infiltration of the  
Motion Picture Industry; Internal  
Security-C"  
100-138754-24  
(3)

[REDACTED] B7C

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A "Writers Congress" was held from October 1 to October 3, 1943 on the campus of the University of California, Los Angeles under the joint auspices of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization and UCLA. The opening session was held on October 1, 1943 at Royce Hall, University of California. Greetings were received from James Cagney, President of the Screen Actors Guild, who was on the stage. The Congress drew charges from California Legislative Fact Finding Committee of Communist instigation and control.

Original source not shown  
Los Angeles rpt. dated Oct. 25, 1943,  
Re: "League of American Writers;  
Internal Security-C"  
100-7322-57  
(3)

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The Bureau received an anonymous letter postmarked December 10, 1943, at New York City. In this letter the writer described James Cagney as public enemy number 1. He stated that Cagney was educated in college and was the king of the underworld. The writer stated that Cagney hides in the theaters so that no one would suspect him, and that he was an expert in the art of make-up and disguise. He described Cagney as a "snake"

[REDACTED]

B6  
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62-108-4573  
(7)

[REDACTED] B7C