

July 10, 1952

Mr. Samuel Goldwyn
Samuel Goldwyn Productions, Inc.
1041 No. Formosa Avenue
Los Angeles, California

Dear Sam:

I have read with deep concern an article in the December, 1951 issue of the American Legion Magazine in which I am mentioned, and also a statement referring to me and compiled by the research staff of The Firing Line.

I would like to answer the article and statement referred to, and submit herewith the facts concerning each item mentioned.

With respect to the reference to my being a speaker on a radio broadcast attacking the House Committee on Un-American Activities as reported in the New York Times on November 3, 1947 and the reference to my brief talk on a broadcast sponsored by the Committee for the First Amendment and then known as "Hollywood Fights Back" as reported in the Daily Peoples World of October 28, 1947, both of these items apparently refer to the same broadcast. It is true that I spoke on such a radio broadcast along with a great many other motion picture personalities, probably more than fifty. My part consisted of not more than a few lines. At that time many important people in Hollywood were opposed to the procedure of the Un-American Activities Committee, and I remember this feeling was influenced considerably by the efforts and talks of Mr. Eric Johnston, President of the Motion Picture Association. It appears that I was unwittingly drawn into this activity by reason of an appeal which at the time seemed to involve a decent American principle. That principle was that no person should be convicted without benefit of trial and advice of counsel. Like many others I subsequently learned that this principle was really not the issue at stake. Had I known then what I learned later I would never have been a member of the Committee for the First Amendment.

It is also true that my name appeared with my consent in a signed statement published by the Committee for the First Amendment also opposing the procedure of the Un-American Activities Committee. I repeat, I never would have authorized the use of my name in this connection if I had known the true import of the group's activity.

It is stated that I was a speaker at a rally of 1,500 "teen agers", reference to which rally was contained in a report of the National Board of American Youth for Democracy to its second annual convention in June, 1946. I have never seen

or never heard of this report before nor did I have nor do I now have any knowledge that this rally might have been sponsored or in any way fostered by the American Youth for Democracy.

I attended and spoke to "teen agers" gathered at Orchestra Hall in Chicago in the Fall of 1945, which I assume is the rally referred to. While I don't remember who invited me to speak to this gathering, I believe I was asked to do so on short notice by someone in the show business and I remember that Mr. Irving Kuppnet of the Chicago Times attended the rally with me. I spoke of racial tolerance particularly with respect to the complete absence of prejudice backstage and between the performer and the audience. I did my utmost, the best way I know how, to influence these young people to try to put a halt to the danger resulting from race rioting in the schools in the area at that time. My appearance was public knowledge and was reported in Kuppnet's column in the Chicago Times of September 28, 1945 and October 1, 1945, as follows:

Chicago Times - September 28, 1945

"The outgrowth of racial feeling among Chicago's South Side high school students so perturbed Danny Kaye, who's in town for his Community and War Fund broadcast tonight, that he volunteered to appear at a youth rally in Orchestra hall tomorrow morning. The comedian cancelled a number of engagements to deliver a speech on racial tolerance."

Chicago Times - October 1, 1945

"Danny Kaye, Hilda Simms and Bill Robinson delivered such impressive talks on racial tolerance at the high school rally in Orchestra hall the other day that Gary authorities are now considering extending Frankie Sinatra an invitation to address their striking students on the same subject. Sinatra has made a concerted effort to use his influence over youngsters to spread racial and religious understanding."

Referring to my connections with the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, it is true that I was a member of this committee and acted as its treasurer for a period of approximately one year. I joined this committee only because of its activities in connection with the reelection of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. When this Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee became involved in studio strike matters I became aware that something might be amiss, along with others. During the war years I strongly resisted the efforts of some of its members to have this committee take a stand on the issue of the Second Front. It then became apparent to me toward the end of 1946 that many Communists had infiltrated this Committee and showed signs of dominating its policies. At that time I resigned from the organization and I have had nothing further to do with it nor did I support it financially or otherwise, directly or indirectly, since then.

Concerning my draft status and the extracts of Westbrook Pegler's writings in connection therewith, I contend that Mr. Pegler's charges are untrue.

The following are the facts concerning my draft status:

I was originally classified in 3A by my draft board #229 in Brooklyn, in 1942. My classification in accordance with routine procedure and without physical examination was changed to Class 1A, in January, 1943. During the spring and summer of 1943, postponement of my induction date was granted in order to permit me to complete your picture "UP IN ARMS". Further postponement of the date was subsequently granted at the request of your office because of unanticipated delay in the completion of the picture. Other than these postponements in connection with your motion picture, I never sought any delay or change in my selective service status.

In August of 1943 while I was still working in that picture, I was losing weight and was not feeling well. I went to a doctor in California for a check-up. The doctor did not like some sounds he heard in my chest and consequently took some X-rays. These revealed some lesions in the apex of my right lung and multiple calcified tubercles. As soon as I finished shooting the picture, and without waiting for re-takes, I got permission from you to go to New York for a check-up by my New York doctor. He examined me and also took X-rays. He confirmed the diagnosis of my California doctor.

Up to then, I had assumed that when I finished the current picture I would be inducted. However, since both my California and New York doctors, as a result of their examinations, had stated to me that there was reasonable doubt in their minds that I would be accepted for military service, and because your production plans, and my future plans, depended greatly upon whether or not I would be inducted into the military service, I sought and obtained an interview with Dr. George Gruman, head of my draft board in Brooklyn.

I explained the results of my doctors' examinations to Dr. Gruman and requested and was granted a pre-induction physical, which was conducted by the draft board doctors. They, too, took X-rays of my chest and of my coccyx which at one time had been fractured. The doctors told me according to Army standards, my classification would remain 1A for while the X-rays showed the lesions and tubercles, they considered them in a dormant state, and in their opinion the condition of my coccyx met Army standards.

I was called for induction on October 30, 1943. I was examined by the doctors at the Induction Center in New York City, who sent me to the Army Hospital at Ft. Jay where I remained for three days. At the conclusion of my examination I was told I had been rejected.

After my pre-induction examination and the examination at Ft. Jay, and before issuance by the draft board of any deferred classification, I was called by my local draft board to appear for further examinations by doctors chosen by the local draft board.

I was examined for several hours by doctors at the Brooklyn State Hospital and I understand the report which was sent to the local draft board confirmed the findings of the doctors at the Army Hospital at Ft. Jay, whereupon I was classified 4F. At no time after that was there any change in my draft status.

At no time did I appeal my classification of 1A and this classification was changed to 4F only after examinations by the doctors at Ft. Jay and the later examinations by the doctors selected by the draft board.

Many applications were made by U.S.O.-Camp Shows and Army officers following my deferment to get permission of the draft board to permit me to entertain troops overseas but the draft board denied these applications. Appeals were taken in this connection to endeavor to obtain permission from the local draft board to permit me to go abroad to entertain service personnel at foreign bases, but never with respect to my draft classification. This matter was presented to Major General Hershey in Washington by the U.S.O.-Camp Shows. They were informed that Gen. Hershey refused to rule on the case and had returned my file to the local draft board. Then efforts were made to have the Appeal Board review the case but without success. However, as soon as the draft board no longer had jurisdiction over me, I volunteered to go to Japan and was authorized to do so by the War Department. I was one of the first entertainers to enter Japan to entertain our troops. During the time that I was refused permission to go overseas I entertained at Armed Forces bases in the United States. In addition to my entertainment of the Armed Forces, I took part in innumerable patriotic rallies, which included the selling of war bonds and entertainment at hospitals for the wounded of World Wars I and II. I made a tour of Germany for the Armed Forces in 1948. During the fall of 1951 I entertained our troops in the front line areas of Korea. I have just completed an extended tour of American Army installations in Africa, France, Italy and Germany, to again entertain troops.

It might be of interest to know what contributions, if any, I have made to these organizations mentioned in The Firing Line article. My records go back to 1945. Neither my accountant nor I have my records prior to that year. I have made no financial contribution whatever at any time to the American Youth for Democracy. Contributions to the Hollywood Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions totaled \$319.40 during the year 1945 and nothing thereafter. I have never made a contribution to The Committee for the First Amendment, excepting perhaps to have paid my own expenses to Washington and I am not sure of that. I have no record of any contribution to any other organization or group which has been declared or cited as subversive by any State or Federal Agency, nor do I recall any such contribution. The remarks in this paragraph apply equally to Mrs. Kaye.

So there can be no misunderstanding, I want to state for the record, under oath, that I never was, nor am I now a Communist or Communist-sympathizer or fellow-traveler, nor did I to my knowledge and belief give them support with my time, money or otherwise. On the contrary, I have always opposed, do now oppose and always will oppose all that Communism stands for.

You have my permission to use this letter in any manner you choose.

Sincerely yours,

(SIGNED) DANNY KAYE
Danny Kaye

KINGDOM OF DENMARK
CITY OF COPENHAGEN
EMBASSY OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA } SS:
SWORN to before me this
22 day of July, 1952.

(SIGNED) WILLIAM R. DUGAN

(SEAL OF AMERICAN
CONSUL SERVICE
COPENHAGEN)

(AMERICAN FOREIGN
SERVICE FEE STAMP)

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