

Good Night. And, Good Luck

by

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&
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INT. CHICAGO THEATER

October 15, 1958. The Radio and Television News Directors Association Annual meeting.

We're in the wings of the theater. Standing there alone is Edward R. Murrow. He looks slightly ill at ease. He lights a cigarette... he looks at some notes in his hand as we overhear his glowing introduction by the MC.

Cheers and applause as we walk with him to the podium.

A long awkward pause.

MURROW

This might just do nobody any good. At the end of this discourse a few people may accuse this reporter of fouling his own comfortable nest, and your organization may be accused of having given hospitality to heretical and even dangerous thoughts.

CUT TO:

Close ups of people listening. Smiling. Not aware that this is not to be the comfortable acceptance speech you might hear of a retiring employee getting his gold watch. This will become what will later be called "The Box of Lights and Wires Speech". One of THE MOST IMPORTANT broadcast journalism speeches EVER. It is an attack on everyone in this room... an attack on himself. And, at this point, it has just begun.

MURROW (CONT'D)

But the elaborate structure of Networks, Advertising Agencies and Sponsors will not be shaken or altered. It is my desire, if not my duty, to try to talk to you journeymen with some candor about what is happening to radio and television. If what I have to say is responsible, then I alone am responsible for the saying of it.

CUT TO:

MURROW

Our history will be what we make of it. And if there are any historians about fifty or a hundred years from now, and there should be preserved the Kinescopes for one week of all three networks, they will there find recorded in black and white, or color, evidence of decadence... escapism, and insulation from the realities of the world in which we live. We are currently wealthy, fat, comfortable and complacent. We have a built in allergy to unpleasant or disturbing information. Our mass media reflect this. But unless we get up off our fat surpluses and recognize that television in the main is being used to distract, delude, amuse and insulate us, then television and those who finance it, those who look at it and those who work at it, may see a totally different picture too late.

CUT TO:

Over black we read: **"The little picture"**

INT. NEWSROOM

Our story starts in a busy TV newsroom. The CBS Newsroom to be exact. The year is 1953. We're following a young female, NATALIE, as she carries a tray with six cups of coffee. For the next few moments she'll give us a tour of the newsroom. Secretaries typing. The AP and UP wire clicking away. A camera crew runs by. A young delivery boy, ED JONES, with several cans of film stops us.

ED

Natalie, this is the Stevenson footage from yesterday...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ED

I think Joe would get the axe...

Ed finishes getting his coffee.

ED

Well, rules are made to be broken.

WERSHBA

I think he's right,
Shirley. What'ya say we
grab a drink tonight...

SHIRLEY

(To Ed)
You can afford to say that.

WERSHBA

It might be good for you to get
out a little.

Shirley smiles.

ED

Just a couple of guys trying to
help.

As Ed leaves.

SHIRLEY

The day I need dating advice from
you two knuckleheads is the...

We hear Ed laughing down the hall. We stay on Joe and
Shirley who just stare at each other in silence. Then
the mood suddenly becomes more serious.

SHIRLEY

Let me see this, I don't know...

He hands her a concealed paper.

WERSHBA

It's simply a "Loyalty Oath".
There's nothing in it about...

SHIRLEY

To CBS?

WERSHBA

To America...

... All the reporters have
it. Fred signed it...

Murrow too... Murrow signed
it.

SHIRLEY

...You promise to be a
loyal American?

Who are you promising this
to? CBS?...Paley?

Murrow signed it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

They sit and look at each other. She reads it again.

<p>WERSHBA ...I've had it for a while, I thought it was a joke at first but... there's a lot of pressure... I don't know.</p>	<p>SHIRLEY (Reading) "Are you now or have you ever been a member of these organizations that appeared on the Attorney General's list of subversive groups."</p>
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SHIRLEY
Alright, let's think about it.
What is it really saying... is it
a civil liberties issue? Is it
censorship?

WERSHBA
I don't know. Is it simply
stating for CBS that I'm not a
communist?

SHIRLEY
Murrow signed it?

<p>WERSHBA And Fred... and Stanton.</p>	<p>SHIRLEY Maybe you should talk to Murrow...</p>
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SHIRLEY
If you don't sign it, are you and
I a target?

WERSHBA
If I don't sign it, they'll fire
me.

Shirley leans over, puts her hand on top of his and gives him a quick kiss.

SHIRLEY
Well at least then we can tell
everyone the truth...

As she exits.

CUT TO:

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY, 1953

We fade up. It's fairly dark. Projected on the wall is footage of MCCARTHY being introduced by MR. KEEFE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

In the foreground - silhouetted, are several of the greatest newsmen of their generation... but they don't know it yet. PALMER WILLIAMS - EDDIE SCOTT - JESSE ZOUSER - FRED FRIENDLY - DON HEWITT - JOE WERSHBA - JOHN AARON - CHARLIE MACK - all young.

They are to become known as "Murrow's Team" and this room is the place where the standard for broadcast journalism will be founded.

Quietly seated in the very back is MURROW.

As they look on we see the footage.

MR. KEEFE

Well, you'd sometimes think to hear the quartet that call themselves "Operation Truth" damning Joe McCarthy and resorting to the vilest smears I've ever heard. Well? This is the answer. And if I could express it in what's in my heart right now, I'd do it in the terms of the poet who once said: "Ah, 'tis but a dainty flower I bring to you. Yes, 'tis but a violet, glistening with dew. But still in its heart there lies beauties concealed. So in our heart, our love for you lies unrevealed."

MCCARTHY

You know, I used to-- pride myself on the idea that I was a bit tough, especially over the past eighteen or nineteen months, and we've been kicked around then bullwhipped and damned. (tearing up) I didn't think that-- I could be touched very deeply. But tonight, frankly, my cup and my heart is so full I can't talk to you.

FRIENDLY

Leo, that's enough, turn it off.

ZOUSER

What poet was that?

WERSHBA

'Tis but a dainty flower I bring to you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ZOUSER
No... Hey, Don, who wrote
that?

SCOTT
There was a young man from
Nantucket...

AARON
I believe it was Roy
Cohn...

FRIENDLY
Did you see that... I just
like it because McCarthy's
crying.

ZOUSER
It's funny. I didn't think
it's all that damning...
but it is funny.

SCOTT
Something, something...
BUCKET

FRIENDLY
No, there's nothing really.
But it sure is fun to see
the Junior Senator
wallowing.

AARON
We'll cut it down - Joe,
we'll make it shorter.

WERSHBA
Yeah, we'll cut it down. Just for
the files.

MURROW sits there head down, cigarette dangling from his
lip.

FRIENDLY
Okay file it, we might use
it later... a piece about
poetry or something...

ZOUSER
Hey, did you hear the
latest polls? The most
trusted man in America is
Milton Berle.

SCOTT
Hey Ed... what rhymes with bucket?

They all smile.

There is a long pause.

MURROW
... Pail.

FRIENDLY
Okay fellas... keep looking. File
that Joe, you and Millie cut it
down to a minute...

They all start to leave.

WERSHBA
(To Murrow)
I saw Charles Laughton in the green
room... is he on the show tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MURROW

Tonight's Person to Person will be
an "At Home" piece with J. Edgar
Hoover and Roy Cohn...

They all laugh.

MURROW (CONT'D)

Vacuuming, making dinner.

SCOTT

...Raising kids

WERSHBA

But, what's Roy doing?

As they exit, JOHN AARON approaches FRIENDLY.

AARON

Fred, did you guys look at the
Secretary Stevens stuff? It's
great.

FRIENDLY

We will, John.

MURROW

Not yet.

AARON

Just watch it till the end... he's
really good on camera...

MURROW

Okay, John.

AARON

All the way to the end; it's worth
it.

MURROW

Thanks, John.

AARON exits.

MURROW and FRIENDLY remain in the room. MURROW seated,
FRIENDLY standing by the door.

FRIENDLY

It's pretty good stuff, Ed.

MURROW

You ever spent any time in
Detroit?

FRIENDLY

We've got twenty or so of these
pieces filed, we could use a
couple...

(CONTINUED)

MURROW

There's a story here in the Detroit Free Press ... Dexter, Michigan... a kid named Milo Radulovich...

FRIENDLY

Italian?

MURROW

Irish... Air Force kicked him out because his dad read some Serbian newspaper... they call Milo a security risk.

FRIENDLY

Is his dad a communist? Who brought the charges?

MURROW

I don't know... the Air Force... the charges were in a sealed envelope, nobody saw them...

FRIENDLY

Not even at the hearing?

MURROW

He was declared guilty without a trial and told if he wanted to keep his job he'd have to denounce his father and his sister... so he told 'em to take a hike.

FRIENDLY

His sister?

MURROW

Let's send Joe and Charlie down there, see if he's any good on camera...

FRIENDLY

Is he being brought before the committee?

MURROW

No.

FRIENDLY

So, it's not McCarthy.

MURROW

Isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

FRIENDLY picks up the newspaper and reads.

FRIENDLY
Milo Radulovich...

CUT TO:

INT. CONTROL ROOM

A close up of a monitor (Kinescope) of Milo Radulovich talking.

MILO
Yes, if I am being judged on my relatives... are my children going to be asked to denounce me... are they gonna be judged on what their father was labeled... are they going to have to explain to their friends etc., why their father is a security risk? I see a chain reaction that has no end to anybody.

We pull out and we're in the control room watching this on screen. In the B.G. we see the darkened News set. In the foreground sits MURROW, FRIENDLY and FRANK STANTON - second in charge at CBS.

Stanton isn't pleased.

STANTON
Well, that's new. I don't think you can call this a neutral piece.

MURROW
Frank, I think the other side's been represented rather well for the last couple of years if...

FRIENDLY
We tried to talk to the Air Force, they haven't gone on record. Their lawyers won't unseal the envelope...I...

STANTON
So, you just want to forego the standards that you've stuck to for fifteen years... both sides... no commentary... I'm just making sure we identify what you're both doing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

<p>MURROW</p> <p>We all editorialize, Frank, it's just to what degree... I'm aware that... Fred, hold on... Fred...</p>	<p>FRIENDLY</p> <p>We're giving them the information up front and asking them to explain themselves...</p>
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MURROW

Frank, I've searched my conscience and I can't for the life of me find any justification for this. I simply cannot accept that there are, on every story, two equal and logical sides to an argument. If you call it editorializing, then call it that... They'll have equal time to defend themselves.

STANTON

It is editorializing. Period. You understand the position you're putting us in?

FRIENDLY

We're all in it together, if the Senate or...

STANTON

Do me this favor, Fred, and avoid any speeches about how we're all in a big boat together... please don't insult me... I have to go back to Mr. Paley and to Alcoa, who sponsors your show and also happens to have military contracts, and tell them they might be caught in a tough bind because of a beef you had with Joe McCarthy.

MURROW

We're not going at McCarthy.

STANTON

You're starting the goddamn fire... I know what this is, Ed...

MURROW

When Bill and I talked about this, you - and this goes back to "Hear It Now" - you, agreed that corporate would have no influence on news content...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STANTON

What I'm saying is - Don't try to con me into thinking that this is good for me... just do me that courtesy.

A knock on the door and NATALIE, Friendly's secretary, pokes her head in.

NATALIE

I'm sorry Mr. Stanton, Mr. Murrow... Fred, there's a Colonel Anderson here to see you...

FRIENDLY

Okay, Natalie, where is he?... Sorry gentlemen..

NATALIE

He's in your office... there's two of them...

FRIENDLY

Maybe these guys love the transcript and are here to congratulate me...

They exit.

MURROW and STANTON just sit there smiling at one another.

STANTON

Go after Joe Kennedy...we'll pay for it.

MURROW

I've got a great story about Hoover...

They both smile. Not happy smiles. Just two men acknowledging that they've come to a crossroad that they may not survive.

STANTON

Do you know how many "Person to Person's" you'll have to do to make this up?...

MURROW nods.

MURROW

Judy and her daughter Liza next week...

STANTON

No chance... you're interviewing Lassie and Mr. Ed back to back...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Silence

STANTON (CONT'D)

I'll talk to Mr. Paley... Alcoa won't pay for the ads... we probably won't either... but nobody will stop you.

MURROW

How much are the ads?

STANTON

Three thousand.

MURROW

I'll split it with Fred...

STANTON starts to exit.

MURROW

He just won't have Christmas presents for his kids this year...

STANTON

He's a Jew.

MURROW

Don't tell Fred, he loves Christmas.

STANTON exits.

We stay on MURROW.

CUT TO:

INT. FRED FRIENDLY'S OFFICE

FRIENDLY, COLONEL ANDERSON and COLONEL JENKINS are seated at the opposite sides of the desk.

ANDERSON

...Yes, we did... and we read the transcript... we've not been allowed to see the footage...

FRIENDLY

We're still shooting it... Charlie Mack is on a plane from Dexter with the last of the interviews. We'll be going right down to the wire.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANDERSON

Your show airs tomorrow... how can we possibly comment on what we're being accused of. You haven't given us...

FRIENDLY

Colonel, with all due respect you have been invited to participate in this piece... not to approve this piece. We're going with the story that says that the US Air Force tried Milo Radulovich without one shred of evidence and found him guilty of being a security risk... without the Constitutional right to...

ANDERSON

And, you, who also have not seen the evidence, are claiming he's not a security risk... wouldn't you guess that the people who have seen the contents of that envelope might know a little more about what makes someone a danger to his country?... or, do you think it should just be you that decides?...

FRIENDLY

Who are these "people"?... Are they elected... appointed... Do they have an axe to grind?... Is it you, sir... or Colonel Jenkins? Do you know the contents of that sealed envelope?...

They sit there very still.

JENKINS

Mr. Friendly. We have been a friend and an ally of both Mr. Murrow and CBS News. The story that you are going to run tomorrow is without merit. So before you take the steps that cannot be undone, I urge you to reconsider your stand. These are very dangerous waters that you are attempting to navigate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

We watch Friendly as he weighs this information.

CUT TO:

INT. EDITING ROOM

Tight on a monitor, Milo Radulovich's lawyer is talking. (This will be the real footage.) Beneath him, on the screen the subtitles read, **October 20, 1953.**

LAWYER

The Air Force did not produce a single witness, we were not told who the accusers were. We had no right to confront them or cross examine them... But at the conclusion of the trial, although we had met the allegations, the Air Force made findings at the conclusion of the hearing that every single allegation was true. As a matter of fact we have had no hearing at all, we have had no day in court. In all the thirty-two years that I have been a practicing attorney in Detroit, I have never witnessed such a farce and travesty upon justice as this thing has developed.

The subtitles fade, the image stops and begins to run backwards.

Another subtitle comes up. **One minute to air.**

We pull back and see we're in the editing bay, FRIENDLY is hopping from one foot to the other. People are scrambling.

FRIENDLY

Damnit Millie, unload this thing before I crack...

I'll tell Don...five seconds...front loaded

MILLIE

A couple more seconds...Is Don ready for this?...Tell him I front loaded the opening for about five seconds extra...

FRIENDLY gets the film and takes off sprinting down the hall yelling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY

OUT OF THE WAY... NATALIE...
NATALIE, tell Joe he's gonna have
to do the voice over live we
didn't get time to sync it up...

NATALIE enters the hall running with him.

FRIENDLY

I need a booth with a live
mic...

NATALIE

Joe's on the set... you
tell him... I'll get the
booth set...

FRIENDLY enters the control room, it's a mad house of
preparation.

FRIENDLY

Don, it's front loaded for
about five seconds and it's
missing the voice-over for
the last piece... Joe can
do it live so we need you
to open a booth...

HEWITT

How much? Five seconds...
THAT'S TOO MUCH, okay.
Which piece is Joe gonna do
live?... Why don't we try
to synch it up with the
whole show on air...?

Friendly looks at the clock.

FRIENDLY

I HATE THIS!

HEWITT

You love it. Fred, did you
time Ed's intro? I think
we're gonna be long...

As FRIENDLY walks into the newsroom, he shouts back.

FRIENDLY

Long is good... Don,
remember no commercial
break...

HEWITT

Right, right... I've got to
add two minutes.

As WERSHBA enters, FRIENDLY heads to the set. We stay
with him as we hear WERSHBA and HEWITT.

WERSHBA

Don, they're doing a commercial in
the booth...you want me to do it
in the control room?

HEWITT

What commercial? We didn't have
any commercial! Yeah, Eddie set
up a mic... No, no wait, what am I
thinking?... Get that idiot out of
the booth... Joe, it's too loud in
here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRIENDLY arrives on the set and there sits MURROW.

We hear "thirty seconds" over the loudspeaker.

Everywhere around, there is chaos... but, right there on the set around MURROW is perfect calm. He just reads his notes, never looking up.

FRIENDLY
We got the film...

MURROW
Will it be ready?

FRIENDLY
Yep.

FRIENDLY lights ED'S cigarette

MURROW
Funny thing, Freddy...

"Twenty seconds" over the loudspeaker.

MURROW (CONT'D)
Every time you light a cigarette
for me I know you're lying.

FRIENDLY
We'll have it.

MURROW
You know it occurs to me that we
might not get away with this one.

They both smile.

"Ten Seconds" over the loudspeaker.

FRIENDLY walks over by the camera, he kneels on one knee.

MURROW sits in silence... for what seems like hours.

The STAGE MANAGER breaks the silence.

STAGE MANAGER
In five... four... three... two...

He points to MURROW

We cut to a TV monitor as MURROW looks up and directly into the camera.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MURROW

Good evening. A few weeks ago there occurred a few obscure notices in the newspapers about a Lieutenant, Milo Radulovich, a Lieutenant in the Air Force Reserves.

As MURROW continues to speak, we see the show from different perspectives. The monitor, the control room, the set... MURROW'S POV

MURROW (CONT'D)

And, also something about Air Force regulation thirty five dash sixty two. That is a regulation which states that a man may be regarded as a security risk if he has close and continuing association with communists or people believed to have communist sympathies. Lt. Radulovich was asked to resign in August. He declined.

As MURROW continues his intro, FRIENDLY on his back slides up to Murrow's desk with a card that reads, **Milo**
piece 2:40

MURROW (CONT'D)

A board was called and heard his case, at the end it was recommended that he be severed from the Air Force, although it was also stated that there was no question whatsoever as to the Lieutenant's loyalty. We propose to examine, in so far as we can, the case of Lt. Radulovich... Our reporter Joe Wershba, cameraman Charlie Mack.

As the footage plays in the B.G., MURROW talks to FRIENDLY.

MURROW

What did the General tell you yesterday?

FRIENDLY

Colonel, but there were two of 'em...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MURROW
That makes a General.

FRIENDLY
They weren't too pleased.

MURROW
You're gonna get audited this
year.

FRIENDLY
Not me, you. I told them I didn't
want to do the piece.

MURROW
You always were yellow.

FRIENDLY
Better than red.

They look at the clock, it reads seven minutes after the
hour.

Under this dissolve we hear MURROW'S V.O.

MURROW (V.O.)
This is the sister, Margaret
Radulovich Fishman. She neither
defends nor explains her political
activities.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

We cut back tight on the monitor, mid-show.

FISHMAN
I feel that my activities be that
what they may or my own political
beliefs are my own private affair.
And, I feel that the charges
leveled against me and by reason
of which they are trying to purge
him from the Army are... you
know... just seem to me to be a
fantastic trend in this country.
It's a... since when can a man be
judged, which in effect, is what's
happened to him, because of the
alleged activities of a member of
his family.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Still on screen we cut to WERSHBA interviewing RADULOVICH.

WERSHBA

I guess a lot of people must have asked you from time to time, wouldn't it have been a lot easier for you if you'd a... well, just sort of kept quiet about the whole thing?... maybe resigned and nobody would have known anything about it... and all this trouble wouldn't have come to you.

MILO

Well, yes, that's right. I could have signed a resignation... which was titled "A Resignation in Lieu of Elimination from the Service" and this would have given me an honorable discharge. However, the honorable discharge would have stipulated that I have been discharged because the Air Force could not trust me. In other words, I had been discharged as a security risk.

WERSHBA

What happens to your two children? That is, your five year old and your five month old in terms of you?

MILO

Yes. If I am being judged on my relatives... are my children going to be asked to, uh... denounce me?... Are they going to be judged on what their father was labeled... to have to explain to their friends etc. why their father is a security risk... I, uh,.. SEE ABSOLUTELY... THIS IS A CHAIN REACTION... IF... if the thing is let stand as the first recommendation, ah... was sent out by the board, I see a chain reaction that has no end to anybody... for anybody...

Cut back to Murrow on the set.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MURROW

Perhaps you will permit me to read a few sentences just at the end because I would like to say rather precisely what I mean. We have told the Air Force that we will provide facilities for any criticisms or corrections it should like to make in the case of Milo Radulovich.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY CBS

As MURROW continues in V.O., we are tight on a clock that reads twenty-eight minutes after the hour.

We pan off the clock and find the second in charge at CBS, FRANK STANTON, walking down the hall towards the control room. He quietly enters.

MURROW (V.O.)

We are unable to judge the charges against the Lieutenant's father or sister because neither we, nor you, nor they, nor the lawyers, know precisely what was contained in that manila envelope.

CUT TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

MURROW (CONT'D)

Was it hearsay, rumor, gossip, slander, or was it hard ascertainable fact that could be backed by credible witnesses? We do not know. We believe the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. Even though that iniquity be proved and in this case it was not... But, we also believe that this case illustrates the urgent need for the Armed Forces to communicate more fully than they have so far done the procedures and regulations to be followed in attempting to protect national security and the rights of the individual!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY, laying on the floor with another card, **one minute.**

We see STANTON standing just inside the door watching MURROW. They lock eyes.

Back on the monitor as MURROW finishes.

MURROW (CONT'D)

At the same time, whatever happens in this whole area of the relationship between the individual and the state, we will do it ourselves, it cannot be blamed on Malenkov or Mao Tse-Tung or even our allies. And, it seems to us - that is, Fred Friendly and myself - that this is a subject that should be argued about endlessly. Good night. And, good luck.

On the monitor, as a commercial comes on.

We cut to the set. Silence. No one moves. They wait five seconds until Fred says...

FRIENDLY

We're out.

The place EXPLODES, cheers... slaps on the back... FRIENDLY comes over to MURROW, the phones ring off the hook.

MURROW

Are we in for it, Fred?

FRIENDLY pointedly lights MURROW'S cigarette.

FRIENDLY

I think we're fine.

They both smile.

MURROW looks up and locks eyes with STANTON again.

STANTON exits.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY CBS

The hallway outside the "See it Now" set is empty. An echo of cheers as the door opens and we watch STANTON walk alone through the hallway... down to the end... and out the door towards William Paley's office.

Over black we read, "After This They're All Gonna Be Rough"

INT. PERSON TO PERSON SET

MURROW, with cigarette in hand, is talking to DEBBIE REYNOLDS, who is in her living room. Her image is projected onto a screen that MURROW talks to.

DEBBIE REYNOLDS

That's probably true, Ed. You know I am fond of the name Ed... can I call you Eddie?

MURROW

I don't know if I'm...

DEBBIE REYNOLDS

How bout Mr. Murrow? Like your father... or Edward, like in G. Robinson... Wouldn't sound right to call him Eddie G. Robinson would it Mr. Murrow?...

MURROW

Ed is just fine...

There are the awkward beats of a man who is uncomfortable in his shoes and a young entertainer trying to keep the conversation going.

MURROW (CONT'D)

...Well, Debbie... or Mrs. Reynolds...

DEBBIE REYNOLDS

Mrs. Fisher... Mr. Murrow... or just Debbie... although, I'm still Debbie Reynolds though my married name is Fisher...

MURROW

Well, then, Debbie thank you for letting us into your home and please give our best to Eddie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE REYNOLDS

I will, yes... thank you so
much...

MURROW

Thank you...

DEBBIE REYNOLDS

Good night. And, good luck.

What... yes...yes.

Good...night...And good
luck.

Yes...I...I.

Good night.

We go to commercial, MURROW sits there. He notices DON
HOLLENBECK, the eleven o'clock anchor and also a friend,
at the stage door. He waves to Don.

NATALIE, FRIENDLY'S secretary, approaches MURROW.

NATALIE

Mr. Murrow...

MURROW doesn't respond.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

...um... Mr. Murrow

MURROW looks up.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Dr. Stanton was wondering if you'd
meet him for a drink?

MURROW

When?

NATALIE

Now. He's at the Pentagon Bar.

MURROW

I can't, what the hell's he doing
there? Just... call him, Natalie.

NATALIE

I'll let him know.

As she exits we follow MURROW to DON. They walk.

HOLLENBECK

You're getting good at this, Ed...
they're gonna think you like it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MURROW

It pays the bills... How are you
Don?...

HOLLENBECK

It's day to day...

MURROW

Well, if she saw how good you look
right now... she'd be back...

HOLLENBECK

Tell her that if you see her...
will you?

MURROW

I read the O'Brian piece.

HOLLENBECK

Yeah pretty tough... I'm a pinko,
I slant the news... I'm just
waiting for him to say my wife
left me too...

MURROW

Nobody worth their salt reads him.

HOLLENBECK

You read him.

MURROW

Well, see, now I rest my case.

They stand there silently.

HOLLENBECK

Does Paley read him?

MURROW

Bill Paley's not going to do
anything Don.

HOLLENBECK

Listen, Ed, thanks... I came down
here because I wanted to tell you
how great the Lieutenant piece
was.

MURROW

Thanks.

HOLLENBECK

How's the fallout?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MURROW

Mostly good, surprisingly

HOLLENBECK

Is this the start? Are you taking sides?

MURROW

It's just a little poke with a stick, see what happens.

HOLLENBECK

Well, let me know if I can help.

They start to walk out of the sound stage.

MURROW

But you're a pinko, Don.

HOLLENBECK

See you, Ed.

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE SENATE CAUCUS ROOM - WASHINGTON DC

JOE WERSHBA and his camera man CHARLIE MACK are walking down the Senate corridor. Charlie carries the camera, Joe has an armload of papers and a few cans of film.

As they walk towards us DON SURINE walks into frame, his back to us, semi blocking our view of Joe and Charlie.

SURINE

Hey, Joe, what's all this Radwich junk you're putting out.

WERSHBA

Don, I don't have time to talk to you now... I've got to get this film off to New York.

SURINE

What would you say if I told you that Murrow was on the Soviet payroll in 1934?

This statement stops both Joe and Charlie cold.

They just stare at Don.

WERSHBA

Give us a second will ya, Charlie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACK

Sure. I'll set up outside.
 (over his shoulder)
 Joe, you want just McCarthy or do
 I get Kennedy and Cohn?

WERSHBA

Might as well get them all.

Charlie exits.

WERSHBA (CONT'D)

(to Surine)
 Is McCarthy going to the
 Eisenhower dinner?

SURINE

No idea, I don't keep the
 Senator's calender for him Joe.

WERSHBA

Really?

The two look at each other. Surine then pulls out a
 manila envelope with the infamous HUAC red stamp on the
 outside.

He hands it to Joe who opens it.

WERSHBA (CONT'D)

Haven't you ever seen any spy
 films Donald? You don't just hand
 me a classified folder. You slip
 it into my briefcase when I'm not
 looking.

SURINE

It's actually perfect. I didn't
 know who to give this information
 to, Paley or Murrow. As you can
 imagine, Fred and I aren't very
 friendly... no pun intended.

WERSHBA

No pun elocuted.

As Joe reads.

SURINE

Elocuted. Is that a word or did
 you just make that up? You boys
 and your words... is Ed in New
 York right now, memorizing a
 thesaurus?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Joe continues to read.

SURINE (CONT'D)
Joe, what's another word for
thesaurus?

WERSHBA
It must be awfully quiet at the
Algonquin now that you're gone.

SURINE
Except for Harpo talking away.

Joe looks up from reading.

WERSHBA
What have you got, Donald?

SURINE
In short? Ed Murrow has been a
communist sympathizer since the
1930's. Member of the
International Workers, sponsor of
educational trips to Moscow... and
on the Soviet payroll in 1934...
it's all there.

WERSHBA
You want to know why that's not
possible? Why you would lose this
one, Donald? Because everyone in
the country knows that, if nothing
else, Ed Murrow is a loyal
American... a patriot.

Surine smiles.

Then...

SURINE
Did you know that the word
gullible isn't in the dictionary,
Joe?

WERSHBA
(holding up the folder)
Can I give this to Ed?

SURINE
I'd like you to. I have copies...

WERSHBA
I think you guys go too far.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He starts to leave.

SURINE

Well if it walks like a duck and
talks like a duck... it's a
terrible shame, Murrow's brother
being a General in the Air Force.

As Wershba exits.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTER OFFICE OF WILLIAM PALEY

MURROW sits waiting, he holds SURINE'S folder which reads
"Confidential" in big red letters.

Time ticks away. This is the only man in America that
can keep Ed Murrow waiting.

The phone rings. Paley's secretary MARY answers.

MARY

Yes, Mr. Paley. Right away. Yes,
sir. No, he hasn't called... yes
sir, the second he calls... if
you're in a meeting, shall I...?
Yes, sir. Of course, sir.

She hangs up.

MARY (CONT'D)

Mr. Murrow, Mr. Paley will see you
now.

MURROW

Thank you, Miss Mary.

MURROW enters.

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

William Paley's office is that of a powerful man.
Paneling, awards, citations, photos with Kings and
Presidents.

PALEY stands behind a high-top desk with a plush leather
stool to lean back on. At this moment, he's standing to
shake his old friend's hand. There is an ease between
these two that few people enjoy with Mr. Paley, they've
been through a war together.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PALEY

Hello, Ed.

MURROW

Bill.

PALEY

Sit over here.

He points to an arrangement of leather chairs around a coffee table.

They both sit.

PALEY (CONT'D)

How's Janet? Your son?

MURROW

All well Bill, thanks. Babe?

PALEY

Fine. She's fine. Her fundraiser got rained on, so...

MURROW

That's why I don't plan anything.

PALEY

Really? You wouldn't know.

MURROW notices that PALEY is holding the same "Confidential" folder.

After an awkward beat.

MURROW

Reading fiction?

PALEY

I hope. You tell me.

MURROW

Well, we know how they're gonna come at us.

PALEY

That's just the first shot. Somebody'll go down...

This sinks in.

PALEY (CONT'D)

Have you checked your facts. Are you on safe ground?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Beat.

MURROW

I've always had this fear of ending up on the wrong side of history... "Peace in our time"

PALEY

...sure, but Chamberlain lacked character... and a spine... no one would accuse you of that.

MURROW

It's time Bill. Show our cards.

PALEY

My cards. You lose, what happens?... Five guys find themselves out of work... I'm responsible for a hell of a lot more than five GODDAMN reporters. Let it go... McCarthy will self-destruct, Cohn, all of them.

MURROW

Bill you told me that corporate would not interfere with editorial - the news is to be left...

PALEY

I write your check. I've put you in that country house. I've put your son through school... and you should have told me about this before it was so far down the road.

He stops himself from taking this too far.

They sit there very still.

Too long.

PALEY

We don't make the news... we report the news.

MURROW

Bill, 99% of the time he's wrong about the people he's marked as communists....

PALEY

...and if he goes too far, the senate will investigate him and we will report on that...

(CONTINUED)

INT. CBS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

We see MURROW walking down the corridor, we hear FRIENDLY in V.O.

FRIENDLY (V.O.)

Fellas, listen... let me make it easier. I just need to know for the good of the piece... if any of you have any connection at all... read a communist newsletter... traveled to St. Petersburg... was your mother dating a socialist in 1922... I don't care, I just need to know.

CUT TO:

INT. SCREENING ROOM

MURROW and all his team are in there but we keep the camera on PALMER WILLIAMS.

WERSHBA

Let's leave my mother out of this...

SCOTT

I did have a fling with a fascist once

FRIENDLY

Fellas, help me out. Really.

ZOUSMER

That musta' been fun.

WILLIAMS

I think I should excuse myself, Ed.

SCOTT

Not after the war...they were a little down.

WILLIAMS

Ed. I think should excuse myself.

FRIENDLY

Christ, okay that kills us. Really Palmer?

ZOUSMER

What is it Palmer? Why?

WILLIAMS

Let me get out now. I don't want to hurt us.

FRIENDLY

Hurt us? We can't do the story.

WERSHBA

Palmer?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLIAMS

My ex was... I wouldn't say she was a communist, but she certainly attended meetings. It was before we were married... it never really came up until after we were divorced... it didn't matter then... we were all on the same side... I'm not telling you anything you don't know... The thing of it is somebody will find out... they'll hurt us with it... I should have told you sooner... I'm sorry, Ed... Fred...

They all sit there in silence.

WILLIAMS goes to leave.

MURROW

Sit down, Palmer.

WILLIAMS sits. Silence.

MURROW (CONT'D)

If none of us ever read a book that was "dangerous", had a friend who was "different", or joined an organization that advocated "change", we would all be just the kind of people Joe McCarthy wants... we're gonna go with the story because the terror is right here in this room.

Wershba stands.

WERSHBA

Mr. Murrow, it's been a privilege to have known you and worked for you.

The place erupts with laughter.

FRIENDLY

What do you mean "have"?

WERSHBA

I mean it's a privilege to know you...

MURROW

And Joe, I'd like to say the same about you... I'd LIKE TO...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

More laughter.

FRIENDLY

OK, fellas, that's it. All the footage we've banked. Everything. Jesse, you and Joe and Charlie go through the HUAC hearings... Eddie and Palmer see what else we have... any speeches he gave, or interviews... his own words, boys, that's what we need...

The dialogue fades and then as we watch the faces of the reporters we hear McCarthy's speech start...

MCCARTHY (V.O.)

The issue between Republicans and Democrats is clearly drawn. It has been deliberately drawn to those who have been in charge of twenty years of treason.

We pan around the room looking at the faces of Murrow's boys.

MCCARTHY (V.O.)

Now the hard fact is, those who wear the label "Democrat" wear it with the stain of historic betrayal.

CUT TO:

INT. EDITING ROOM

Tight on a monitor, we now see MCCARTHY on screen.

Any man who has been given the honor of being promoted to General and who says, "I will protect another General who protects communists", is not fit to wear that uniform, General...

We pull back to see EDDIE SCOTT, PALMER WILLIAMS, CHARLIE MACK and JOE WERSHBA watching, taking notation, editing the piece.

MACK

So, the Zwicker case was in a closed hearing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WERSHBA

...We couldn't put a camera in there...we had nothing.

MACK

Literally, nothing. He goes after a decorated General... Battle of the Bulge...

Normandy...

...Nothing

WERSHBA

McCarthy is publicly humiliating the Commanding General at Camp Kilmer... and we don't have it.

WERSHBA (CONT'D)

So, we follow the Junior Senator to Philly,

(to Hewitt)

use the pan down of the Washington Mural. Don, it's perfect... so, McCarthy gets up to speak at a Washington's birthday celebration... and can you believe it... he pulls out the goddamn transcript from the Zwicker closed hearing and he re-enacts it for everybody... verbatim...

(to Hewitt)

use the part there where he cackles, it's great.

MACK

And, this time fellas, we shot the hell out of it.

Back on McCarthy.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

And, wait till you hear the bleeding hearts scream and cry about our methods of trying to drag the truth from those who know or should know who've covered up a Fifth Amendment communist major. But they say, "Oh, it's alright to uncover them but don't get too rough doing it, McCarthy..."

CUT TO:

INT. EDITING ROOM TWO

MILLIE LERNER rushes up to JESSE ZOUSMER with two cannisters of film. Over this we hear SECRETARY STEVENS.

SECRETARY STEVENS (V.O.)

I shall never accede to the abuse of Army personnel, under any circumstances, including committee hearings. I shall not accede to them being brow beaten or humiliated.

We go to the Moviola to see SECRETARY STEVENS.

SECRETARY STEVENS (CONT'D)

In light of those assurances, although I did not propose the cancellation of the hearing, I acceded to it.

CUT TO:

INT. WRITERS ROOM

There is a lot of activity, people coming in and out, footage being watched, work being done. This is all in silhouette.

Projected on the wall we see MCCARTHY going after a writer, REED HARRIS, an official in charge of State Department broadcasts to foreign countries.

MCCARTHY

And were you expelled from Columbia?

HARRIS

I was suspended from classes on April 1st, 1932. I was later reinstated, and I resigned from the university.

MCCARTHY

And you resigned from the university. Uh. Did a Civil... Civil Liberties Union provide you with an attorney at that time?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRIS

I had many offers of attorneys and one of those was from the American Civil Liberties Union, yes.

MCCARTHY

The question is: "Did the Civil Liberties Union supply you with an attorney?"

HARRIS

They did supply an attorney.

MCCARTHY

The answer is yes?

HARRIS

The answer is yes.

MCCARTHY

Uh, you know the Civil Liberties Union has been listed as a front for and doing work of the Communist Party.

HARRIS

Mr. Chairman, this was 1932.

MCCARTHY

Yeah, I know this was in 1932. Do you know that they since have been listed as a front for, and doing the work of the Communist Party?

HARRIS

I do not know that they have been listed. So, sir, no I do not.

MCCARTHY

(Overlapping)

You don't, you don't know they have been listed?

HARRIS

I have heard that mentioned and or read that mentioned.

MCCARTHY

(Overlapping)

I see. Now, now you, you wrote a book, in 1932.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Uh, I'm going to ask you again, at the time you wrote this book, did you feel that professors should be given the right to teach sophomores that marriage, uh, let me quote, "...should be cast out of our civilization as antiquated and stupid religious phenoma-- phenomenon." Was that your feeling at the time?

HARRIS

My feeling was that professors should have the right to express their considered opinions on any subject, whatever they were, sir.

MCCARTHY

Wait, I'm going to ask you this question again.

HARRIS

That includes that quotation. They should have the right to teach anything that came to their minds as being a proper thing to teach.

MCCARTHY

I'm going, I'm going to make him answer this. I'm going to make him answer.

HARRIS

Well, I, I'll answer yes. But, but you, you put an implication on it and you feature this particular point out of a book which of course is quite out of context, does not give a proper... proper impression of a book as a whole. The American public doesn't get an honest impression of even that book, bad as it is, from what you're quoting from it.

As the projector plays on, we go to NURROW and his team.

SCOTT

I like where he says, "skillfully wringing my neck."

FRIENDLY

We could cut Kennedy out and shorten the piece... Joe... how much of Cohn going after this guy do we have?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SCOTT

He's great. He talks about his book... it's... funny... puts his own book down... says the sales were so "abysmal"... just great.

WERSHBA

It wasn't Cohn as much as McCarthy.

WILLIAMS

I want to read the book now...

ZOUSMER

Better anyway, it won't be that tough to show Roy as an ass...

FRIENDLY

Yeah, maybe get somebody to read his book, it would be best if the guy wasn't actually a commie... what? Don't I think what?... Yeah stick with Joe.

WERSHBA

Yeah, we should just stick with the Junior Senator, don't you think... Fred?... don't you think... we should stick with McCarthy?

MURROW

Alright Leo...that's enough...turn it off.

The projector is turned off and the light comes up.

FRIENDLY

It's pretty good, Ed... this one holds his own...

SCOTT

Adlai Stevenson... that's our ace in the hole...

WERSHBA

I've got Mundt at the end of the reel... Howard... Fred... just know that there's good stuff at the end of the reel.

MACK

There's more on the reel... Joe... there's Mundt...

FRIENDLY

Okay hang on...HANG ON GUYS...okay...

MACK

I told you to put it up front Joe if you want Ed to see it..

FRIENDLY

Fellas... Joe, just file it... did you file it?... I don't want anybody outside this room involved... I mean it.

WERSHBA

I'll get Mary to file it... okay... yeah yeah.

The guys are starting to exit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

WERSHBA

Ed, if you just watch the end...
I'll get a Kinescope of it,
it's... it might be just what
we're looking for. Really.

FRIENDLY

Okay, Joe, we'll look at it.

As the men rush to get this on the air.

MURROW

Are we gonna make it?

NATALIE pokes her head in.

FRIENDLY

We lost a projector... yeah, we'll
make it.

NATALIE

I'm sorry Mr. Friendly. Mr
Murrow, Mr. Paley's on the line.

FRIENDLY

Maybe he's going to reimburse us
for the ads.

MURROW picks up the phone.

MURROW

You'd like that.

FRIENDLY

I would like that.

MURROW

(Into phone)

This is Ed.

PALEY (V.O.)

There's a Knickerbocker game
tonight... I've got front row
seats... are you interested?

MURROW

(Smiles)

I'm a little busy bringing down
the Network tonight, Bill..

PALEY (V.O.)

Is that tonight?

MURROW

Knickerbockers you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

PALEY (V.O.)

Front row.

MURROW

It's tempting.

Beat.

MURROW (CONT'D)

We're covered Bill.

PALEY (V.O.)

Alright.

Beat.

PALEY (CONT'D)

I'm with you tonight, Ed... and
I'll be with you in the morning as
well.

MURROW

Thanks Bill.

We stay on MURROW walking out of the room as he puts on
his jacket.

CUT TO:

INT. JOE & SHIRLEY WERSHBA'S NY APT. - MORNING

We start on Shirley as she brushes her hair in the vanity
mirror, Joe dresses behind her.

As Joe tells the story we stay on the worried face of
Shirley.

WERSHBA

My argument was that if you just
show the images of McCarthy then
it won't make any difference. If
you agree with him you'll hate the
piece, and if you don't you'll
love it.

SHIRLEY

Maybe they should wait till they
get more footage...

WERSHBA

I don't think we can take the
chance. We have to hit McCarthy
before he comes after Ed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHIRLEY

They haven't gone after the Alsops
or Herb Block...

WERSHBA

The Alsops and Herb Block didn't
work for the Institute of
International Education in 1934.

A pause.

As Shirley takes off her wedding ring and puts it on a
chain around her neck.

SHIRLEY

Then I guess it's time.

She turns and looks at him to help him tie his tie.

WERSHBA

(smiling)
Worried?

SHIRLEY

I didn't think I was. I don't
know why... I was in the office on
Friday... I answered the phone and
it was Howard calling from London.
He asked me what was going on with
McCarthy, and before I answered
him I turned and looked over my
shoulder to see who was listening.

She finishes with his tie and gives him a kiss.

WERSHBA

And who was listening?

SHIRLEY

Chairman Mao...

They both smile.

WERSHBA

I'll see you at work.

He starts to leave.

SHIRLEY

Hey... your ring.

Joe stops and takes it off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHIRLEY

Name me another wife that reminds
her husband to take off his
wedding ring before he goes to the
office.

WERSHBA

Ava Gardner.

They smile as he exits.

We stay on Shirley as she sits back down and looks at
herself in the mirror.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The show is already underway, you could cut the tension
with a knife. MURROW continues his pre-recorded
introduction on the monitor.

MURROW (V.O.)

Because a report on Senator
McCarthy is by definition
controversial, we want to say
exactly what we mean to say and
request your permission to read
from a script whatever remarks
Murrow and Friendly may make.

CUT TO:

MURROW (CONT'D)

If the Senator feels that we have
done violence to his words or
pictures and desires so to speak
to answer himself, an opportunity
will be afforded him on this
program. Our working thesis
tonight is this quotation: "If
this fight against Communism has
made a fight between America's two
great political parties, the
American people know that one of
these parties will be destroyed..."

HEWITT

Ready two.

The phone rings, he answers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEWITT (CONT'D)

No, this is not the eleven o'clock news try forty-four -- Operator, I tell you every week to shut off these phones. Now please, no calls 'til eleven.

MURROW (CONT'D)

And the Republic cannot endure very long as a one party system."... We applaud that statement and we think Senator McCarthy ought to. He said it seventeen months ago in Milwaukee.

HEWITT

Take two... roll film

We now see McCarthy on camera.

MCCARTHY

The American people realize that this cannot be a fight between America's two great political parties. If this fight against communism is made a fight against America's two great political parties the American people know that one of those parties will be destroyed and the Republic can't endure very long as a one party system.

CUT TO:

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

PALEY sits watching by himself.

MURROW

On one thing the Senator had been consistent. Often operating as a one man committee, he has traveled far, interviewed many, terrorized some, accused civilian and military leaders of the past administration of a great conspiracy to turn over the country to communism.

CUT TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

MURROW is seated in his chair. On the monitors is McCarthy.

MCCARTHY

Well, may I say that I was extremely shocked when I heard that Secretary Stevens told two Army officers that they had to take part in the cover up of those who promoted and coddled communists. As I read this statement I thought of that quotation, "On what meat doth this our Caesar feed?"

INT. STAGE 44

DON HOLLENBECK sits at the news desk watching a monitor with great pride.

On the monitor is more footage of the REED HARRIS hearing.

SENATOR MCCLELLAN

Do you think this book that you wrote then did considerable harm? It's publication might have an adverse effect on the public by an expression of the views contained in it?

HARRIS

The sale of that book was so abysmally small, it was so unsuccessful, that the question of it's influence, uh really, you can go back to the publisher, you'll see it was one of the most unsuccessful books ever put out. He's still sorry about it, just as I am.

SENATOR MCCLELLAN

Well, I think that's a compliment to American intelligence.

INT. JOE & SHIRLEY WERSHBA'S NY APT.

Shirley watches on the TV

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW

The Reed Harris hearing demonstrates one of the Senator's techniques. Twice he said, "The American Civil Liberties Union was listed as a subversive front." The Attorney General's list does not and never has listed the ACLU as subversive, nor does the FBI, or any other federal government agency. And, the ACLU holds in it's files, letters of commendation from President Truman, President Eisenhower and General MacArthur.

The rest of MURROW'S speech will be intercut with close-ups of all our players. Sitting silently at home, in the control room, the newsroom, Paley's office, at home with Shirley Wershba.

MURROW (CONT'D)

Earlier, the Senator asked, "Upon what meat does this our Caesar feed?" Had he looked three lines earlier in Shakespeare's "Caesar" he would have found this line which is not altogether inappropriate: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves." No one familiar with the history of this country can deny that congressional committees are useful. It is necessary to investigate before legislating, but the line between investigating and persecuting is a very fine one; and the Junior Senator from Wisconsin has stepped over it repeatedly. We must not confuse dissent with disloyalty. We must remember always that accusation is not proof and that conviction depends upon evidence and due process of law. We will not be driven by fear into an age of unreason, if we dig deep in our history and our doctrine, and remember that we are not descended from fearful men, not from men who feared to write, to speak, to associate and to defend the causes that were for the moment unpopular.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MURROW (CONT'D)

We proclaim ourselves as indeed we are, the defenders of freedom wherever it continues to exist in the world; but we cannot defend freedom abroad by deserting it at home. The actions of the Junior Senator from Wisconsin have caused alarm and dismay amongst our allies abroad and given considerable comfort to our enemies. And, whose fault is that? Not really his. He didn't create this situation of fear, he merely exploited it, and rather successfully. Cassius was right. "The fault dear Brutus is not in our stars but in ourselves." Good night. And Good luck.

CUT TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

MURROW looks to FRIENDLY who is lying at Murrow's feet. They look to the control room...HEWITT shrugs his shoulders.

MURROW

Nothing?

FRIENDLY

Natalie, call down and ask the switchboard if something's wrong.

MURROW

Maybe nobody watched.

They sit in silence.

MURROW slumps back in his chair exhausted, he watches DON HOLLENBECK on the eleven o'clock news come up on the monitor.

HOLLENBECK

I don't know whether all of you have seen what I just saw, but I want to associate myself and this program with what Ed Murrow has just said, and say I have never been prouder of CBS.

Still the phones are silent. MURROW and company still slumped in their seats. A page pokes his head into Studio 41.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CBS PAGE

Do you still want the calls held
back, Mr. Hewitt?

The staff breaks out in relieved laughter.

FRIENDLY

Open 'em up.

MURROW

It's the Junior Senator
calling collect.

The phones start a chorus of rings all through the
studio.

FRIENDLY and MURROW look at each other.

FRIENDLY

Don't kid yourself, It's Reed
Harris thanking us for putting him
on the best-seller list.

They both light cigarettes and sit there basking in the
glorious sounds of phones ringing.

MURROW

You feel like a scotch?

FRIENDLY

I think everybody could use one.

CUT TO:

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

PALEY sits behind his desk leaning back in his chair.
His head resting on the back of the chair.

The Phone rings. And keeps ringing. Paley makes no move
to answer it.

We fade to black as the sound of the phone keeps ringing.

INT. PENTAGON BAR - NIGHT

It's late night and our players are split up in different
booths waiting for the morning editions to come in... in
our first booth Friendly, Murrow and Hollenbeck are
seated and Shirley is standing with Joe. Hollenbeck is
telling a story.

MURROW

Hey Fred... what time is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY

3:30, early editions are out now.

MURROW

I'm not worried about that.

FRIENDLY

No. Of course not...

(he looks to Shirley)

Hey Shirl... honey, run across the street and pick up the early editions.

SHIRLEY

All of them?

FRIENDLY

All of them.

MURROW

Just get O'Brien.

SHIRLEY

OK, watch my drink.

MURROW

That's like getting Tyrone Power to watch your girl.

WERSHBA

I'll go with you Shirley..

FRIENDLY

Or Jackie Gleason to watch your sandwich..

*

They watch Joe and Shirley exit the bar.

MURROW

(offering Don a
smoke)

I'm going to have to fire Joe so those two can date...

HOLLENBECK

(waving off the
cigarette)

I quit.

MURROW

(smiling)

Good time to quit.

CUT TO

Aaron, Scott and Zousmer are huddled in another booth.

SCOTT

... yeah, but what could you do?

AARON

Well, first we want to see if we have jobs tomorrow..

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

AARON
 ...And IF we still have a
 job today then Tail Gunner
 Joe gets to return fire.

ZOUSMER
 What's he gonna say?

SCOTT
 He's gonna say we're a
 pinko organization with a
 leftist agenda...

AARON
 We used his own words...
 it's ... well we do have a
 leftist agenda... *

ZOUSMER
 (a little too loud)
 I'm a PINKO..

Silence... the room got a little too quiet

SCOTT
 A little too loud there buddy...

ZOUSMER
 It got awfully quiet there didn't
 it?

CUT TO

We're back with Fred and Ed

FRIENDLY
 We've got Annie Lee Moss... We can
 have that together by next week if
 need be..

MURROW
 Is that a whole show?

FRIENDLY
 It's close... Listen Ed, there's
 not going to be a shortage of
 material on him, what we have to
 do now is keep up the pressure
 till his rebuttal... and then move
 to Calcutta...

They smile a long beat

MURROW
 Radio... I sure do miss radio.

FRIENDLY
 You've got a face for radio..

MURROW
 That's what my wife keeps telling
 me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Joe and Shirley come back in with several papers stacked in their arms.

SHIRLEY

Alright, here we go... The Times...

SCOTT

Who wrote it?

SHIRLEY

Jack Gould.

WERSHBA

Gould.

SHIRLEY

"Edward R. Murrow's television program on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy was an exciting and provocative examination of the man and his methods. It was crusading journalism of high responsibility and courage. For TV so often plagued by timidity and hesitation, the program was a milestone that reflected enlightened citizenship".

They all cheer.

FRIENDLY

He didn't like it.

MURROW

Yeah, what's this guy's beef?

SHIRLEY

Hold on... "The program was no less a indictment of those who wish the problems posed by the senator's tactics and theatrics would just go away and leave them alone. That was Mr. Murrow's and television's triumph, and a very great one".

They all cheer.

MURROW

Fritz, send the New York Times a bottle of scotch.

FRIENDLY

I already did... how do you think we got that review?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ZOUSMER

What about the Post?

WERSHBA

It's pretty good.

FRIENDLY

What about O'Brian?

SHIRLEY

The same.

They all laugh.

HOLLENBECK

Shirley, what'd O'Brian say?

SHIRLEY

I don't have it... Joe, what about you?

WERSHBA

It's somewhere here...

He looks through the papers until he finds it, and hands it to Shirley.

SHIRLEY

Hang on... OK, Jack O'Brian...

Shirley reads from the paper.

SHIRLEY

"We can't say we were surprised at Edward R. Murrow's 'Hate McCarthy' telecast last evening. When his explosively one sided propaganda edited with deviously clever selectivity from McCarthy's March against Communism was finished last evening, by equally Machiavellian coincidence the following telecast featured Murrow's "PM" protege Hollenbeck. In an obviously gloating mood, Hollenbeck hoped viewers had witnessed his patrons triumph from and for the left."

The room is getting quieter, the mood much less jubilant. Everyone is aware of the Hollenbeck attacks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SHIRLEY WERSHBA
...and so on and so on... I guess O'Brian doesn't
like scotch...

HOLLENBECK
It's OK, Shirley... finish it.

SHIRLEY FRIENDLY
That's it... it's just... Shirley, read the Post...

HOLLENBECK
Finish it, Shirley...

SHIRLEY WERSHBA
That's it, Don. Yeah, that's it.

Don stares at her until she gives in.

SHIRLEY
Ah... OK, it says "The Columbia
Broadcasting System has been in a
lengthy "clean house of lefties"
mood. The worst offenders on
lesser levels have been quietly
pushed out of the company... Don
Hollenbeck, a graduate of the
demised pinko publication "PM"
attacked conservative newspapers
with sly and slanted propoganda...
he then proceeded through an
equally tilted review of the day's
events with McCarthy dominating
his words, actions, attitude and
camera... it's O'Brian.

SCOTT
Is that gramatically correct?

HOLLENBECK
I'll have that cigarette, Ed.

CUT TO:

Over black we read, "The Penalty of an Outraged
Citizenry"

INT. ELEVATOR - CBS - DAY

We start inside an elevator as the doors open on the
second floor, we see Fred walking in. A couple of people
congratulate him on the show. Jimmy's on the elevator.
Going up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY

Hey, Jimmy...

JIMMY

Fred... congratulations...

FRIENDLY

Thanks... it gave me an
ulcer....

JIMMY

All the ad guys watched it
on the 3rd floor...

FRIENDLY

Times gave us a great
review... Jack Gould...
really 15 to 1..

JIMMY

The switchboard lit up all
night. We're gonna put out
a press release that says
the calls were 15 to 1 in
favor of the show... calls
came in from everywhere...
Kansas City...
Cincinnati...Just the east coast, or did
you hear from...

The door opens on the 10th floor. We see Paley get on
the elevator. The atmosphere changes immediately.
Paley's not in as excited a mood.

FRIENDLY

Mr. Paley...

PALEY

Good morning... morning,
Fred.

JIMMY

Good morning, Mr. Paley.

PALEY

How's your wife, Fred?

FRIENDLY

She's fine, sir. We're getting
ready to move...

PALEY

Really? Where to?

FRIENDLY

Riverdale. We found a nice house.

PALEY

It's nice there.

They ride in silence. We arrive at the 34th floor. The
door opens.

FRIENDLY

Excuse me.

Fred starts to exit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PALEY

Fred...

Fred stops and holds the elevator door.

PALEY

McCarthy wants William Buckley to do his rebuttal... I told him no.

FRIENDLY

Yes, sir.

Fred exits and we follow him down the corridor and into the projection room.

INT. PROJECTION ROOM

In the darkened room projected on the a screen is Eisenhower standing at a podium.

In the foreground silhouetted are MURROW and SCOTT, the usual. They will start talking midway through the speech.

EISENHOWER

In this country, if someone dislikes you or accuses you, he must come up in front. He cannot hide behind the shadows, he cannot assassinate you or your character from behind, without suffering the penalties of an outraged citizenry. If we are going to continue to be proud that we're Americans, there must be no weakening of the code by which we have lived. By the right to meet your accuser face to face by your right to go to the church or the synagogue or even the mosque of your choice.

This speech will continue on in the B.G.

FRIENDLY

I like the part about Wild Bill Hickock, let's keep that in...

WERSHBA

This stuff is from November... Ed, it works with the Annie Lee Moss but the sound falls apart. Charlie pulled the camera back and I couldn't get a mike in close.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY
Where does this go...
Ed...

MURROW
You can still hear it.
... at the end, Eric.

The film stops as Natalie pops her head in.

They all look back.

NATALIE
McCarthy wants April 6th...

This sits very heavy in the room.

FRIENDLY
Thanks, Natalie.

She exits.

FRIENDLY (CONT'D)
Alright. We go with the Annie Lee
Moss story next week. We'll keep
the heat on him... see what he
does.

SCOTT
He'll deny the allegations
and go after Stevenson.

WERSHBA
Do they want Charlie to
shoot it or are they going
to do it?

FRIENDLY
What allegations? He's not
going to deny his own words
on film...we used his
words.

WERSHBA
It'd be nice if they just
let Charlie shoot it. We'd
get to see it first.

MURROW
We know what it'll be.

They all listen.

MURROW (CONT'D)
He's gonna come after me. It's
the only thing he can do. He's
going to bet that a Senator trumps
a Newsman.

FRIENDLY
He'll lose.

MURROW
Maybe.

DON HOLLENBECK sticks his head in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HOLLENBECK

Ed. You got a minute?

MURROW

Yeah, Don.

FRIENDLY

Okay, fellas. Annie Lee Moss.
Joe, call legal let'em know.

WERSHBA

This will be fun.

FRIENDLY

Bill, let's see all the
Eisenhower footage you've
cut.

The men exit leaving MURROW & HOLLENBECK alone in the
room.

MURROW

Sit down. I missed you the
other night, I'm sorry I
was...

HOLLENBECK

I need to ask you
something... Ed...

it's about O'Brian...

O'Brian doesn't matter...

He's killing me... he...
Ed...

O'Brian doesn't amount to a
hell of a lot in a newsroom
Don.

HOLLENBECK

It's not just him... we have to
let this guy have it, he's... we
should expose O'Brian for the--

MURROW

We're not going after O'Brian,
Don. I won't take on McCarthy and
Hearst. I can't beat them both.
Don't read the papers... or...
don't read O'Brian anyway.

Beat.

HOLLENBECK

No, I guess not.

There is a long pause.

HOLLENBECK (CONT'D)

I wake up in the morning, and I
don't recognize anything. I feel
like I went to sleep three years
ago and somebody hijacked...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HOLLENBECK (CONT'D)
as if all reasonable people took a
plane to Europe and left us
behind... trying to make sense out
of... insanity... I was always an
optimist... really... I always
felt like things would work out...
half full...

MURROW
I believe that... it's the beauty
of all this... we designed it so
we can fix it... Jefferson built
it into the Constitution...

HOLLENBECK
I was talking about my divorce...

They smile.

MURROW
So was I...

A sad smile

HOLLENBECK
Well, I'm glad the Forefathers
understood the term "Dissolution
of a Union..."

MURROW
I'm sure they had their share of
difficulties with the opposite
sex.

HOLLENBECK
I'm talking about McCarthy.

They smile again.

MURROW
So am I.

A sad grin.

HOLLENBECK
Okay. I thought I'd try.

MURROW
Sorry, Don.

Hollenbeck starts to leave, he stops and turns to Murrow.

HOLLENBECK
We didn't have this
conversation... okay?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MURROW
 (Talking too loud
 into the ceiling
 lamp)
 IF IT'S OKAY WITH YOU, SENATOR.

HOLLENBECK
 (As he exits)
 Don't laugh... I've thought
 about it.

NOTE: THIS NEXT SCENE WILL START IN A RECORDING BOOTH AS MURROW RECORDS HIS VOICEOVER OF THE ANNIE MOSS FOOTAGE. WE MAY HEAR SOME OF THIS... WE WILL ALSO SEE FRIENDLY AND STANTON ARGUING ABOUT SOMETHING. WE'LL SHOOT THROUGH DOORWAYS AND BACKS OF ROOMS ALL THE WHILE MRS. MOSS WILL BE TESTIFYING....

CUT TO:

INT. SENATE HEARING ROOM

Annie Lee Moss is being questioned by a Senator Symington.

SENATOR SYMINGTON
 Have you ever had any information
 that you received in your job that
 you passed on to anybody about
 these codes?

ANNIE LEE MOSS
 No, sir.

SENATOR SYMINGTON
 Did anybody ever ask you to, for
 any of that information?

ANNIE LEE MOSS
 No, sir. If they had, I would
 have reported 'em.

SENATOR SYMINGTON
 You would have reported them?

ANNIE LEE MOSS
 I certainly would have.

SENATOR SYMINGTON
 Has anyone ever asked you to join
 the Communist party?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE LEE MOSS

No, sir.

SENATOR SYMINGTON

Has anybody ever asked you to join any organization of any kind that you thought might be against the best interest of the United States?

ANNIE LEE MOSS

No, sir.

SENATOR SYMINGTON

What are you living on now? Have you got any savings?

ANNIE LEE MOSS

No, sir.

SENATOR SYMINGTON

You haven't?

ANNIE LEE MOSS

No, sir.

SENATOR SYMINGTON

If you, uh, uh, uh, don't get work, uh, pretty soon, what are you going to do?

ANNIE LEE MOSS

Going down to welfare.

SENATOR SYMINGTON

Going down to welfare.

ANNIE LEE MOSS

Uh-huh.

CUT TO:

WE SEE MORE IMAGES OF MURROW PREPARING THE SHOW... AND HEAR MORE OF MURROW'S VOICEOVER.

INT. SENATE HEARING ROOM

Annie Lee Moss is now being questioned by Roy Cohn and Senator McClellan.

ROY COHN

I have no further questions of this witness at this time.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROY COHN (CONT'D)

I can say this, we have the testimony of Miss Markward, the undercover agent for the FBI, stating that Annie Lee was, was a member, a dues-paying member of the Communist Party, uh... the Northeast Club of the Communist Party. We have corroboration of that testimony by another witness who was called before the committee and gave their sworn statement to the effect that she also knew Mrs. Moss as a member of the Northeast Club of the Communist Party.

SENATOR MCCLELLAN

Well, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make... we're making a statement here against a witness who has come and submitted to cross-examination. Now, she's already lost her job. She's been suspended because of this action. I'm not defending her. If she's a Communist, I want her exposed. But, to make these statements as we've corroborating evidence that she is a Communist. Under these circumstances, I think she's entitled to have it produced here in her presence and let the public know about it and let her know about it.

There is applause.

SENATOR MCCLELLAN (CONT'D)

I don't like to try people by hearsay evidence.

More applause.

WE ARE NOW OUT ON THE STREET, LOOKING AT TELEVISIONS IN A TV REPAIR SHOP.

SENATOR MCCLELLAN (CONT'D)

I'd like to get the witnesses here and try 'em-- by testimony, under oath.

CHAIRMAN MUNDT

The, uh, chair will rule that the comment of Mr. Cohn be stricken from the record.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SENATOR MCCLELLAN

Well, I didn't ask that. I didn't ask that, Mr. Chairman.

WE ARE NOW IN THE PENTAGON BAR, AS PATRONS WATCH THE TELEVISION

CHAIRMAN MUNDT

... executive session whether we should try to, uh, produce a witness in public because the FBI may have her undercover and we don't want to, uh-

SENATOR MCCLELLAN

You can't strike these statements made by counsel here as to evidence that we're having and withholding. You cannot strike that from the press nor from the public mind once it's planted there. That's the, that is the, uh, the evil of it. And I don't think it's fair to a witness, to a citizen of this country, to bring 'em up here and cross-examine 'em. Then when they get through say, "We've got something, the FBI has got something on you that condemns you." It is not sworn testimony, it's convicting people by rumor and hearsay and innuendo.

Applause.

CUT TO:

A CARD THAT READS, APRIL, 6 1954

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

This scene will be built with a lot of very tight close ups of crew and reporters. Everyone is very aware of their vulnerability. Cameramen glancing at one another. Stage Manager focusing on the monitor.

Right now it's silent as they wait for MURROW to arrive.

We pull Ed in a close up as he enters into the room and sees the film canisters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEWITT

Ed, it's twenty eight minutes. I could clip a little off the end for you to have time to...

MURROW

I think we have to leave it alone, Don.

He starts tearing out pages.

MURROW (CONT'D)

Very smart, no time for comment... when did it come in?

HEWITT

Ten minutes ago. We put it up, I saw the first couple of minutes, you're right.

MURROW

Coming after me?

HEWITT nods.

MURROW (CONT'D)

Joe, have you seen the latest polls?... The most trustworthy man in America is Milton Berle.

WERSHBA

Maybe he should do the story.

MURROW

Get him on the line, will ya?

MURROW walks onto the stage. FRIENDLY'S there. Against the back wall are Murrow's team.

MURROW

Fred.

FRIENDLY

What say we grab a little dinner after the show? The "21 Club"?

MURROW

Sure.

He sits noticing The Boys. They give little waves, MURROW acknowledges them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MURROW (CONT'D)

What're they here for? "The
Monkey and the Bell" show is on
stage three.

FRIENDLY

They changed the title. "Goin'
Ape"

MURROW

Who's their first guest?

The loudspeaker - "Thirty seconds to Air"

FRIENDLY

After tonight, I hear it's you.

They smile.

FRIENDLY (CONT'D)

Look, there's nothing fun about
this one. You've just gotta put
your gloves down, stick your chin
out and just take it for a whole
round. Next week's our round.

MURROW

If I make it up off the mat.

MURROW takes out a cigarette, FRIENDLY lights it.

Loudspeaker - "Twenty seconds to air"

FRIENDLY

You will.

MURROW

Did you see the latest polls,
Milton Berle's the most trusted
man in America...

FRIENDLY

You already did this joke for
me...

They look at each other.

FRIENDLY

I'll get Berle on the line.

Loudspeaker - "Ten seconds"

MURROW sits there again in silence. The weight of the
world sitting there with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STAGE MANAGER

In five, four, three, two...

He points to MURROW.

We come up on the monitor as MURROW speaks directly at us.

MURROW

One month ago tonight we presented a report on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. We labeled it as controversial. Most of that report consisted of words and pictures of the Senator. At that time, we said if the Senator believes we have done violence to his words or pictures, if he desires to speak, to answer himself, an opportunity would be afforded him on this program. The Senator sought the opportunity, asked for a delay of three weeks because he said he was very busy and he wished adequate time to prepare his reply. We agreed. We placed no restrictions on the manner or method of the presentation of his reply and we suggested that we would not take time to comment on this program. Here now is Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, Junior Senator from Wisconsin.

McCarthy begins. As he delivers his rebuttal we will cut to various places that it is airing.

For the moment we're right on MURROW as he watches.

MCCARTHY

Good evening. Mr. Edward R. Murrow, Educational Director of the Columbia Broadcasting System, devoted his program to an attack on the work of the United States Senate investigating committee and on me personally as its Chairman. Now, over the past four years, he has made repeated attacks upon me and those fighting communists. Now, of course, neither Joe McCarthy nor Edward R.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Murrow is of any great importance as individuals. We are only important in our relations to the great struggle to preserve our American liberties.

CUT TO:

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

PALEY watches in silence.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Now ordinarily, I wouldn't take time out of the important work at hand to answer Murrow. However in this case I felt justified in doing so because Murrow is a symbol, the leader and the cleverest of the jackal pack which is always found at the throat of anyone who dares expose individual communists and traitors.

CUT TO:

INT. JOE & SHIRLEY WERSHBA'S NY APT.

Shirley watches.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

I am compelled by the fact to say to you that Mr. Edward R. Murrow, as far back as twenty years ago was engaged in propaganda for communist causes. For example, the Institute for International Education of which he was the Acting Director, was chosen to act as a representative by a Soviet agency to do a job which would normally be done by the Russian Secret Police.

Back to MURROW on the set.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Mr. Murrow sponsored a communist school in Moscow...

This speech will continue but we'll hear MURROW and FRIENDLY talking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW

When the politicians complain that TV turns the proceedings into a circus, it should be clear that the circus was already there, and that TV has only demonstrated that not all the performers are well trained.

FRIENDLY

We've got him, Ed.

MURROW

If he led with his best.

FRIENDLY

He led with his best.

CUT TO:

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

Now, Mr. Murrow, by his own admission, was a member of the IWW, that's the Industrial Workers of the World, a terrorist organization cited by an Attorney General of the United States...

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY CBS

It's empty. McCarthy's voice echoing.

MCCARTHY

Now, Mr. Murrow said on this program and I quote, he said, "The actions of the Junior Senator from Wisconsin have given considerable comfort to the enemy"

MURROW walks into the hall followed by FRIENDLY, WERSHBA, MACK, they walk toward us as the speech continues.

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

That is the language of our statute of treason. If I am giving comfort to our enemies, I ought not to be in the Senate.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCCARTHY (CONT'D)

If on the other hand, Mr. Murrow is giving comfort to the enemies, he ought not to be brought into the homes of Americans by the Columbia Broadcasting System.

As they exit we stay on the empty hallway.

We fade to black as McCarthy drones on.

WE WILL PUT A COMMERCIAL IN THIS SPOT... DISHWASHING LIQUID OR SOMETHING WE FIND IN THE ARCHIVES...

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

We are on the set of "See it Now" as MURROW addresses us directly.

MURROW

Last week, Senator McCarthy appeared on this program to correct any errors he might have thought we made in our report of March 9th. Since he made no reference to any statements of fact that we made, we must conclude that he found no errors of fact. He proved again that anyone who exposes him, anyone who does not share his hysterical disregard to decency and human dignity and the rights guaranteed by the Constitution must be either a Communist or a fellow traveler. I fully expected this treatment. The Senator added this reporter's name to a long list of individuals and institutions he has accused of serving the communist cause. His proposition is very simple: Anyone who criticizes or opposes McCarthy's methods must be a Communist. And if that be true, there are an awful lot of Communists in this country. For the record, let's consider briefly some of the Senator's charges. He claimed but offered no proof that I had been a member of the Industrial Workers of the World. That is false.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW (CONT'D)
I was never a member of the IWW,
never applied for membership.

CUT TO:

INT. CONTROL BOOTH

We cut to the control booth, HEWITT and company watch on
as the broadcast continues.

HEWITT
Ready two... hold it...hold...
take two... tell 'em Ed.

MURROW (CONT'D)
The Senator charged that Professor
Harold Laski, a British scholar
and politician dedicated a book to
me. That's true. He is dead. He
was a Socialist, I am not. He was
one of those civilized individuals
who did not insist upon agreement
with his political principles as a
pre-condition for conversation or
friendship. I do not agree with
his political ideas. Laski, as he
makes clear in the introduction,
dedicated the book to me not
because of political agreement but
because he held my wartime
broadcast from London in high
regard; and the dedication so
reads.

HEWITT
Ready on one... closer, Charlie...
take one...

CUT TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

Again MURROW addresses us directly.

MURROW (CONT'D)
I believed twenty years ago and I
believe today that mature
Americans can engage in
conversation and controversy, the
clash of ideas, with Communists
anywhere in the world without
becoming contaminated or
converted.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW (CONT'D)

I believe that our faith, our conviction, our determination are stronger than theirs and that we can compete and successfully, not only in the area of bombs but in the area of ideas.

CUT TO:

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

As PALEY watches on a television.

MURROW (CONT'D)

I have worked for CBS for more than nineteen years. The company has subscribed fully to my integrity and responsibility as a broadcaster and as a loyal American. I require no lectures from the junior Senator from Wisconsin as to the dangers or terrors of Communism - having watched the aggressive forces at work in Western Europe.

CUT TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

MURROW (CONT'D)

Having had friends in Eastern Europe butchered and driven in exile, having broadcast from London in 1943 that the Russians were responsible for the Katyn Massacre - having told the story of the Russian refusal to allow allied aircraft to land on Russian fields after dropping supplies to those who rose in Warsaw and then were betrayed by the Russians.

CUT TO

INT. GREEN ROOM

Morrow's team watch and smoke.

WERSHBA
(Quietly)

Go Ed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW

And having been denounced by the Russian radio for these reports. I cannot feel that I require instruction from the Senator on the evils of Communism

CUT TO:

INT. "SEE IT NOW" SET

MURROW addresses us directly.

MURROW (CONT'D)

Having searched my conscience and my files, I cannot contend that I have always been right or wise but, I have attempted to pursue the truth with some diligence and to report it, even though as in this case I had been warned in advance that I would be subjected to the attentions of Senator McCarthy. We shall hope to deal with matters of more vital interest to the country next week. Good night. And good luck.

We go to a commercial. As we hear it play, we see Murrow stand up. He shakes people's hands, there are some pats on the back... not victorious... not afraid... simply a job well done.

Murrow looks over to Friendly who lights Murrow's cigarette.

MURROW

That ought to hold him.

FRIENDLY

Are you a gambling man?

MURROW

Just with your career.

FRIENDLY

(smiles)

Not just mine...

He nods in the direction of Wershba, Zousmer, Aaron and Beck, smoking in the back of the stage.

Murrow waves to his boys and they wave back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We hear the song "How High The Moon" under this shot.

CUT TO

INT. PERSON TO PERSON SET

It's a couple of hours till air time.

ELLA FITZGERALD is rehearsing "How High the Moon." In the background MURROW is seated in his easy chair, there is a small table for his ash tray. A few people are milling about preparing for the show. Murrow talks to TED CHURCH, a CBS executive. Church reads from the New York Times.

CHURCH

"In the last analysis, the Senator was perched on the television high dive and all prepared to make a resounding splash. He jumped beautifully, but neglected to check first where he was going to land. It must have been something of a shock to discover that Mr. Murrow had drained the water out of the pool."

CHURCH

Jack Gould... yeah, the Times.

MURROW

Jesus. Is that the Times? Gould?

MURROW

He's a hell of a writer, I'll tell you that. You should hire him away from the Times...

Friendly enters the stage and walks toward them.

CHURCH

Well, Stanton's got a public opinion survey that Elmo Roper put together that says that 33% of households believe McCarthy proved you're a commie...

MURROW

Only 33%?

(to Friendly as he approaches)

Hey Fred, did you hear... Radulovich got reinstated... Ted, where's that Radulovich letter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRIENDLY

Listen, Ed...

MURROW

We're a hit... up there with Howdy
Doody.

FRIENDLY

Hold on Ed.

Ella continues to sing in the background as the two men look at each other. Fred says something to Murrow that we can't hear. A look of disbelief spreads across Murrow's face. Friendly then hands the note to confirm. This sits with two men as Murrow gets up and walks off of the set and into the hall.

Ella continues to sing which will score the rest of the scene. Over these scenes we will also hear the voice of Joe Wershba.

WERSHBA (V.O.)

"Don Hollenbeck was one of the most prominent members of the CBS lefties. And, he hewed to its incipient pink line without deviation."

CUT TO:

INT. DON HOLLENBECK'S APARTMENT

Hollenbeck alone, is taking towels and placing them along the baseboards of his one room apartment.

WERSHBA (V.O.)

"He was a reactionary leftist. He drew assignments which paid him lush fees, pink painting his news items and analysis always with a steady left hand."

CUT TO:

INT. CBS CORRIDOR

We see a close up of Murrow as he walks down the hallway continuing his exit from Person to Person... the pain on his face for all to read.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WERSHBA (V.O.)

"Hollenbeck was a graduate of several suspicious training posts. He was with the Office Of War Information when it was loaded with commies."

CUT TO:

INT. PERSON TO PERSON SET

Friendly just sits there re-reading the note.

WERSHBA (V.O.)

"He did a stretch as a top editor of the commie-laden newspaper PM, whose staff was infiltrated slyly by a slew of sinister types not equalled this side of the daily worker."

CUT TO:

INT. DON HOLLENBECK'S APARTMENT

We see Hollenbeck turn up the gas on his oven but not light it. He leaves the oven door open and sits back in his chair to wait for his long needed sleep.

WERSHBA (V.O.)

"The fact of Newscaster Don Hollenbeck's suicide yesterday does not remove from the record the peculiar history of the leftist slanting of news indulged consistently by the Columbia Broadcasting System."

Ella's song ends. It's silent.

CUT TO:

INT. PERSON TO PERSON SET

Friendly sits silently on the set.

CUT TO:

INT. CBS CORRIDOR

Murrow stands in the hallway smoking, his back leaning against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. DON HOLLENBECK'S APARTMENT

TV light flickers a test pattern and the familiar high pitched tone of a network that has signed off for the evening.

Slumped in his chair in the shadows, is Hollenbeck.

CUT TO:

INT. GREEN ROOM

Williams, Scott and Mack sit silently as Joe Wershba finishes reading aloud from a newspaper.

WERSHBA (V.O.)

"Hollenbeck was what most astute students of CBS's strange and questionable new methods considered 'typical of its newscasters'"...

Beat

WERSHBA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... by Jack O'Brian.

They sit in silence.

SCOTT

(Quietly)

What time is it?

MACK

Nine-forty.

SCOTT

He wrote that... not twelve hours after Don was dead...

Beat.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

The son of a bitch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MACK

Let's see what we can find on Jack O'Brian.

They sit there.

WERSHBA

And then, what are we?... Don Hollenbeck had a troubled marriage... and he died... he had the decency not to leave a note.

More silence.

WERSHBA (CONT'D)

... And because of that no one will ever remember Jack O'Brian.

Wershba leans over and turns up the sound on a TV where Murrow gives a last minute obituary about Hollenbeck. We watch it with the boys.

MURROW

One of the best programs I ever heard was called "CBS Views The Press". A great many people liked it, some didn't, but no one ever said it was anything but honest. It was the work of an honest reporter. Don Hollenbeck. He also worked occasionally on "See It Now". He did the 11 PM News over some of these stations.

He had been sick lately and he died this morning. The police said it was suicide. Gas.

Not much of an Obit... but, at least we got our facts straight... and it was brief. And, that's all Don Hollenbeck would have asked.

Good Night. And, Good Luck.

Over black we read: "At long last have you no sense of decency"

INT. CBS HALLWAY

WERSHBA is running... we're close on his face as he navigates the corners.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We can hear MURROW and the BOYS talking in the office instead of Wershba's breathing... he runs into Wershba's office.

WERSHBA

The senate's investigating
McCarthy.

THE NEWS FREEZES THE ROOM

CUT TO

INT. PERSON TO PERSON SET

As Murrow interviews Judy Garland, on the monitor the ARMY/McCARTHY HEARINGS are on... Murrow and the crew stay fixed on the hearings, as Judy drones on we listen to the famous fight between Welch and McCarthy ending in the line "at long last sir have you no sense of decency" Natalie enters and passes Murrow a note and starts to exit.

MURROW

Natalie... did he say what it's
about?

NATALIE

No, Mr. Murrow. Just that he
wanted to speak to you in his
office...

MURROW

Have you no sense of decency
Natalie?

CUT TO

INT. NEWSROOM - CBS

Ted Church, head of the CBS News division, walks down through the newsroom, he spots Wershba typing. Shirley is across the office on the phone.

CHURCH

Joe... where's Shirley?

Wershba looks up not sure what's going on. He points to Shirley on the phone.

CHURCH (CONT'D)

Shirley? Can I talk to you both?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WERSHBA

Okay... let's go into the
projection room.

CHURCH

Fine... Shirley... how are you?

As they walk into the projection room.

SHIRLEY

Fine, Ted.

CHURCH

Sit down.

WERSHBA

Is there a problem, Ted?

CHURCH

I want to ask you both a question,
but I don't want you to answer it.
Just consider it. I know you two
are married...

They both just sit there looking straight ahead.

CHURCH (CONT'D)

Everyone knows... that's not my
question... in the next few weeks
I have to lay a couple of people
off... we're making some
significant cuts across the board.
I wanted you to know that.
Because if you have any intention,
in the near future, of starting a
family, I would say to you, that
you could save someone else from
being fired. I'm asking you to
consider making this decision a
little easier. I don't need an
answer now. Just think about it.

Church stands and leaves.

Joe and Shirley just sit there.

After a few beats they start to slowly quietly laugh.
There is a melancholy to this moment.

Joe reaches into his pocket, pulls out his wedding ring
and places it on his finger, Shirley does the same.

WERSHBA

Well, Mrs. Wershba...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SHIRLEY

We're going to miss you around here, Joe.

They stand to leave.

WERSHBA

I'll pack my things.

SHIRLEY

I think it's for the best.

As they exit.

Finally.

WERSHBA

Everybody knew.

CUT TO:

INT. PALEY'S WAITING ROOM

Friendly is seated on the couch as Murrow walks in. Murrow walks over and sits down next to Friendly.

MURROW

Uh Oh

Fred smiles and the two just sit in silence, then we hear....

INT. PALEY'S OFFICE

Paley is seated at his desk, across from him sit Murrow and Friendly.

PALEY

The problem isn't simply that you've lost your sponsor. With Alcoa, "See it Now" still loses money.

FRIENDLY

The fee is fifty-thousand. And last week's show we did for less than the fee.

PALEY

Fred, you're speaking beyond your competence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW
We'll find another
sponsor... we can certainly
find someone who wants
to...

PALEY
"\$64,000 Question" brings
in over eighty-thousand in
sponsors and costs a third
of what you do.

PALEY
Ed. I've got Tuesday night
programming that's number one.
People want to enjoy themselves.
They don't want a civics lesson.

MURROW
Well what do you want Bill?

PALEY
I don't want a constant stomach
ache every time you do a
controversial subject.

MURROW
I'm afraid that's the price you
have to be willing to pay.

PALEY
Careful Ed. Let's walk carefully
through these next few moments...

MURROW
But the content of what we're
doing is more important... than
what some guy in Cincinnati...

PALEY
...What you're doing Ed. Not me.
Not Frank Stanton. You.

MURROW
"CBS News", "See it Now" all
belong to you.

PALEY
You wouldn't know it.

MURROW
Is it credit you want?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PALEY

I never censored a single program, I hold on to affiliates who wanted entertainment from us, I've fought to keep our license with the same politicians that you were bringing down, and I never said no to you. Never.

MURROW

I would argue that we've done well by one another. I would argue that this network is defined by what the news department has accomplished. I would also argue that never saying no, is not the same as "not censoring."

PALEY

Really. Well you should teach journalism... You and Mr. Friendly.

Pause.

PALEY (CONT'D)

Let me ask you this: Why didn't you correct McCarthy when he said that Alger Hiss had been convicted of treason? He was only convicted of perjury. You corrected everything else. Did you not want the appearance of defending a known communist? I would argue that everyone censors... including you.

MURROW

What do you want to do, Bill?

PALEY

I'm going to take your show from half an hour to an hour. But, it won't be a weekly program. And, it won't be Tuesday night.

MURROW

When would it be?

PALEY

Sunday afternoon.

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MURROW

How many episodes?

PALEY

Five.

MURROW

Why don't you just fire me?

PALEY

I don't think it's what either of us wants.

Silence.

PALEY (CONT'D)

You owe me five shows.

MURROW

You won't like the subject matter.

Murrow and Friendly get up to leave.

PALEY

Probably not. Fred, I'll need you for a moment.

We follow Murrow out to the hall where he waits for Fred. We stay on his face for a few moments and then we hear Fred approach.

They walk down the executive hallway.

FRIENDLY

He wants me to lay a few people off.

MURROW

I'm sure.

FRIENDLY

Let's do the first show about the downfall of television.

MURROW

The Senate's gonna vote to censure McCarthy tomorrow...

FRIENDLY

Probably.

MURROW

What happens then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

FRIENDLY

He sits in the back row...

MURROW

Right... they keep him in the Senate... they don't kick him out.

FRIENDLY

No... he stays... he'll just lose all of his power.

MURROW

He's already lost all his power... now it's just teaching him a lesson.

This sits with the two old friends.

They start to walk to the elevators.

FRIENDLY

Well, we might as well go down swinging. We'll do the story about the migrant farm workers... make a couple of enemies.

MURROW

Have you seen the latest polls Fred? The most trusted man in America is Milton Berle.

FRIENDLY

See, maybe you should have worn a dress.

MURROW

Works for Hoover.

FRIENDLY

Shhh... he's listening.

MURROW

How does scotch sound?

FRIENDLY

Scotch is good.

MURROW

Did you know Joe and Shirley were married?

FRIENDLY

Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

MURROW

Did everybody know?

FRIENDLY

Pretty much...

We pass a bank of monitors that start on Milton Berle. We pan to the next monitor and it's Howdy Doody. To the next and it's Kookla Fran and Ollie. The next one is Murrow giving the last of his "Box of Lights and Wires" speech. We move in on the monitor.

MURROW

I began by saying that our history will be what we make it. If we go on as we are, then history will take its revenge, and retribution will not limp in catching up with us.

MURROW (CONT'D)

Just once in a while, let us exalt the importance of ideas and information. Let us dream to the extent of saying that on a given Sunday night, the time normally occupied by Ed Sullivan is given over to a clinical survey on the state of American education, and a week or two later, the time normally used by Steve Allen is devoted to a thoroughgoing study of American policy in the Middle East. Would the corporate image of their respective sponsors be damaged? Would the stockholders rise up in their wrath and complain? Would anything happen other than a few million people would have received a little illumination on subjects that may well determine the future of this country and therefore the future of the corporations.

CUT TO:

INT. CHICAGO THEATER

Back on our original set.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MURROW (CONT'D)

To those who say people wouldn't look, they wouldn't be interested, they're too complacent, indifferent and insulated, I can only reply- there is, in one reporter's opinion, considerable evidence against that contention. But even if they are right, what have they got to lose? Because if they are right, and this instrument is good for nothing but to entertain, amuse and insulate, then the tube is flickering now and we will soon see that the whole struggle is lost.

CUT TO:

INT. CBS CORRIDOR

We cut back to the monitors. As Murrow finishes we pan around to other monitors. Watching the history of TV played out in sound bites.

We see:

Kennedy being shot,

John John's salute,

Vietnam,

Man landing on the moon,

Lucille Ball,

Archie Bunker,

Watergate,

Laugh-In

Carter with Begin and Sadat,

The Hostages in Iran,

Sixty Minutes,

Reagan's - "Mr. Gorbachev tear down this wall.",

Inside Edition,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The O.J. Chase,
Michael Jackson,
Victorias Secret,
Bill O'Reilly...

And the camera moves in on a single shot of Jerry Springer as people are throwing chairs and chanting, "Jerry!"

MURROW V.O (CONT'D)
This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, and it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends.

We freeze on the frame as we see a fist-fight break out

MURROW V.O (CONT'D)
Otherwise, it is merely wires and lights in a box.

We fade to black.

MURROW V.O (CONT'D)
...Good Night. And, Good Luck.

THE END