

The Cold War on the Waterfront: Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge* and Elia Kazan's *On the Waterfront*

Robert Shulman

University of Washington

The Cold War of my title refers partly to the American Inquisition of the late 1940s and 1950s, to the war at home against the spies and subversives who were supposedly members of a worldwide Communist conspiracy to violently overthrow the American government. Not only demagogues like Senators McCarthy and McCarron but also a wide range of respectable American business, academic, and government officials almost universally accepted the premise that the Soviet Union was messianically committed to imposing its internal tyranny on the rest of the world. Judge Learned Hand, a distinguished civil libertarian, invoked this premise in deciding against the First Amendment rights of the ten communist leaders convicted in the Smith Act trials of 1948.¹ Similarly, as Clark Clifford wrote in his 1946 secret memorandum to President Truman, every American communist or former communist "is potentially an espionage agent ... requiring only the direct instructions of a Soviet superior to make the potentiality a reality."²

This thinking was the basis for Truman's 1947 Federal Employees

1. Learned Hand, *The Art and Craft of Judging: the Decisions of Judge Learned Hand*, ed. Hershel Shanks (New York: Macmillan, 1968), "United States v. Dennis" (1950), esp. pp. 78-80.

2. Griffin Fariello, *Red Scare: Memories of the American Inquisition, an Oral History* (New York: Norton, 1995), p. 35.

Loyalty Program which subjected millions of Americans to investigations questioning their associations and beliefs. As a preemptive strike against right-wing Republicans, the Truman administration also published its Attorney General's list of subversive organizations. During the 1930s and early 1940s progressive Americans routinely supported these Popular Front organizations before they became stigmatized as Communist fronts. As an integral part of the Cold War abroad, American officials in and out of the government waged a war against their most progressive, idealistic, and independent citizens. Of course spies existed—and the existing espionage laws were perfectly adequate to deal with genuine espionage and treason. But by 1952 the distinctions between espionage, treason, disloyalty, and dissent had blurred. The Crusade against communism seemed more and more a crusade to discredit Roosevelt's New Deal, a war ironically carried out partly by Roosevelt's anticommunist successors.³ For the anticommunist, anti-New Deal right, the Alger Hiss case played a central role in the drama. In the absence of hard evidence of widespread espionage, in the logic of the period if Alger Hiss could be found guilty then *all* of the Roosevelt administration was discredited.

Then and now deciding if Hiss was or was not a spy probably reveals more about the person making the decision than it does about Hiss. The evidence one way or the other is ambiguous and open to interpretation. Conservative historians and journalists, on the other hand—they include Allen Weinstein, Harvey Klehr, George Will, Eric Breindel, and Tom Powers—believe that Soviet documents released during the 1990s establish that Hiss was a spy. Along with some writers on the Rosenbergs—Sam Tanenhaus, Ronald Radosh, and Terry Teachout, for example—they reinforce the narrative of widespread Communist Party involvement in espionage. In their view the issue is settled and for them we are obliged to conclude that under the smoke of the anticommunist crusade there was the fire of actual, widespread espionage.⁴ For critics including John Lo-

3. Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and Internal Security* (New York: Knopf, 1972).

4. See, for example, Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood* (New York: Random House, 1999) and Weinstein's earlier book on Hiss, *Perjury: the Hiss-Chambers Case* (New York: Knopf, 1978; updated edition, New York: Random house, 1997); Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) and Sam Tanenhaus, *Whittaker Chambers* (New York: Random House, 1997).

wenthal, Victor Navasky, Ellen Schrecker, Maurice Isserman, and Walter and Miriam Schneir, however, the issues are not at all settled, or if they are they point to Hiss's innocence and to a minimizing of the role of the Communist Party rank-and-file in genuinely subversive activities.⁵

Beyond Hiss and the Rosenbergs and including the entire period, what we have now as during the Cold War is a contested ideological battlefield, a continuing series of conflicts in an ongoing intellectual war about the Cold War. My essay is an episode in this continuing controversy. As I see it what participants can do is to read as widely and deeply as possible, to interpret as responsibly as they can, and to recognize that those with different presuppositions will evaluate the evidence in their own way.

To return to the argument, then, in the Cold War at home, since overt acts of espionage and treason were hard to establish, from the outset beliefs were primary targets. The beliefs of the enemy were endowed with the kind of insidious Satanic power dramatized in the 1956 version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Innocent looking flowers are revealed as sinister agents that turn your next door neighbor into one of THEM. The infection of communism could be transmitted invisibly and *anyone*

5. The case rebutting the Weinstein, Klehr position and outlining the difficulties in interpreting the Soviet documents can be found on the website on Alger Hiss and the Venona transcripts, <http://homepages.nyu.edu>, especially John Lowenthal, "Venona and Alger Hiss," with citations to the relevant primary and secondary literature. In addition to the articles by Lowenthal, Alterman, Volkogonov, the Schneirs, Navasky, Reuben, and Knight, see also Athan G. Theoharis, ed., *Beyond the Hiss Case: The FBI, Congress, and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), esp. Victor Navasky, "Weinstein, Hiss, and the Transformation of Historical Ambiguity into Cold War Verity" and the essay-review of Klehr's *The Secret World of American Communism* by Maurice Isserman, "Notes from Underground," *Nation* (June 12, 1995), pp. 846-, 48, 50-56. See also the overview of the Cold War period in William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II* (New York: Oxford, 1995), pp. 31-78; Daniel Yergin *A Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (New York: Penguin, 1977); Athan G. Theoharis and John Stuart Cox, *The Boss: J. Edgar Hoover and the Great American Inquisition* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988); Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998). On the Rosenbergs, see "Introduction," *The Rosenberg Letters: A Complete Edition of the Prison Correspondence*, ed. Michael Meeropol (New York: Garland, 1994), pp. xvii-xli and Walter and Miriam Schneir, *Invitation to an Inquest* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), the standard book challenging the Rosenberg conviction. The Schneirs' most recent view, based on documents released from the Soviet archives, is that Ethel Rosenberg was uninvolved and was charged to pressure her husband to name names and that Julius Rosenberg was involved in a spy ring of low-level technicians having nothing to do with atomic energy or the Bomb. Walter and Miriam Schneir, "Cryptic Answers," *Nation* (Aug 14/21, 1995), pp. 152-153. William Kunstler disputes this view and from an opposing point of view so do Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, "Rosenbergs Redux," *Nation* (Oct. 16, 1995), p. 406. For the case against the Rosenbergs, see Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton, *The Rosenberg File: A Search for the Truth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1983).

could catch it. And once a person was infected, it took an expert to detect it. America was at once the most powerful, prosperous, and virtuous country in the world and at the same time vulnerable to take-over by aliens and alien beliefs. The custodians of ideas and beliefs in the universities and especially Hollywood were irresistible targets for the experts in detecting subversion. Intellectuals had been infected and had to be exposed. Because of their impact, films in particular had to be kept pure of the taint of communism. From 1946 on a series of well-publicized hearings in Hollywood drove the message home. The glamour of Hollywood was not only an added attraction—it was the central attraction. The actual danger of a serious or even frivolous idea emerging from the highly structured, highly supervised, and immensely profit-oriented studio system—that was out of the question as Ring Lardner, Jr., one of the Hollywood Ten, cogently argued.⁶

After initial resistance to HUAC—the House Un-American Activities Committee—the big studios fell in line once their bankers warned them of the consequences of not cooperating with the investigating committees. The threat of public demonstrations by the American Legion and Catholic protestors against “communist” tainted films reinforced the basic financial pressure. With no exceptions I am aware of a “communist” film had nothing to do with content and everything to do with a writer or producer who had once belonged to the Communist Party or a proscribed organization on the Attorney General’s list. The writers of such dangerous films as *A Star Is Born*, *Pride of the Marines*, and *Kitty Foyle* pleaded with their interrogators to show one suspect line in any of their films but the inquisitors were not interested in the overt act of the actual film but rather in the film maker’s previous associations, present beliefs, and the future harm he might do unless he disowned his radical past and testified to his current and future loyalty.⁷ In the years immediately following a victorious war to defeat European fascism, to men and

6. Ring Lardner, Jr., “My Life on the Blacklist,” *Saturday Evening Post*, Oct. 14, 1961, reprinted in *Thirty Years of Treason: Excerpts from Hearings before the House Committee on Un-American Activities*, ed. Eric Bentley (New York: Viking, 1971), p. 194.

7. For representative testimony before HUAC see *Thirty Years of Treason*. For retrospective interviews and analysis, see Victor S. Navasky, *Naming Names* (New York: Viking, 1980) and Fariello, *Red Scare*. For comprehensive analysis of the blacklist and HUAC in Hollywood, see Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund, *Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930-1960* (Garden City: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1980).

women who had given their all in that fight and who were committed to a progressive vision of American democracy, this assault on the First Amendment sounded like the first stage of a native fascism. The principled outrage that animates works like Dalton Trumbo's 1949 *Time of the Toad* is worth recalling.⁸

In the world of the Hollywood blacklist, to demonstrate loyalty the erring film person had to undergo a ritual of degradation that included a statement condemning communism, regretting his or her earlier involvement as a dupe of an authoritarian, conspiratorial master, and praise of the committee, of its fair procedures and virtuous aims.⁹ Before he could be fully cleared, moreover, as a final sign of good faith the former communist or communist sympathizer was required to name the names of fellow members. The committee and the FBI already had the names. The exercise was not to provide information but to humiliate both the informer and those informed on, to break the will and sense of self-worth, particularly of the informer, who was asked to betray the confidence of close friends and comrades. Elia Kazan's *New York Times* ad the day after he named names is a model of the required form and I will return to it later.¹⁰ I should note here, however, that Kazan was in a position to defy the committee, to add his immense prestige to those who refused to cooperate instead of the reverse. At the height of his creative powers he would have lost his Hollywood career at a time when he wanted to leave the theater and concentrate on films. This loss is admittedly a huge price for a person to pay and not a choice a democratic government should force its citizens to make but Kazan also knew he could have continued directing on Broadway. The New York theater was unaffected by the blacklist. Broadway productions were financed by hundreds of independent investors, not by a few conservative banks, and the New York theater audience may also have played a role.

In Hollywood the ritual of degradation, purification, and certification was inseparable from the blacklist that dominated the movie, radio, and

8. Dalton Trumbo, *The Time of the Toad: A Study of Inquisition in America* (London: Journeyman Press, 1949, 1982).

9. On rituals of degradation, see Navatsky, *Naming Names*, pp. 314-329, esp. p. 319.

10. Elia Kazan, "A Statement" reprinted from the *New York Times*, April 12, 1952 in *Thirty Years of Treason*, pp. 482-484.

television industries for the decade between 1948 and 1958. The blacklist was fed by a network of experts on subversion. At the center of the network was J. Edgar Hoover and his leaks to the investigating committees and to favored journalists like George Sowkolski and to the investigators and publicists of *Red Channels*, the journal that ferreted out and vetted so-called disloyal media people.¹¹ In addition to relying on the FBI, these investigators culled the letterheads of the Popular Front organizations of the 1930s and the war years, organizations that included communists, socialists, union organizers, noncommunist radicals, and New Dealers who formed a working alliance to oppose fascism, to support the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War, to support civil rights for blacks, to support friendship with the Soviet Union, and to support the organizing rights of labor at home. The friction between communists and noncommunists did not prevent cooperation and it did not prevent people from leaving when they felt they were being used. Although communists were influential in these groups, the members of Popular Front organizations knew what was going on. The idea of the dupe is basically a right-wing, postwar construction.

Sometime between 1938 and 1948 Popular Front organizations were transformed by the right into Communist Front organizations and the aura of subversion and treason was added. For the young radicals of the 1930s and 1940s, however, their sympathy with the Soviet Union was not at the expense of their commitment to an America they believed in and believed needed radical change. For them it is not so much that they followed Marx as that they found that Marx was on their side. The compilers and enforcers of the blacklist were of course completely at odds with that principled rage against privilege that animated the young Elia Kazan or the deep sense of "solidarity with all those who had failed in life" that compelled Arthur Miller from his student days during the late thirties through to the great works of his maturity.¹² Kazan and Miller were among the hundreds of young radical writers, photographers, film

11. On Hoover at the center of the anti-communist web, see the analysis and references in Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*. On diverse reactions to the rituals of degradation, see Navasky, *Naming Names* and Fariello, *Red Scare*.

12. Michel Ciment, *Kazan on Kazan* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1973), pp. 12-13 and Arthur Miller, *Timebends: A Life* (New York: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 395.

makers, painters, and musicians who during the depression and after believed that capitalism was finished and a new system was necessary to return control to ordinary people instead of big business. Stimulated by Marx and by what many saw as the achievements of the Soviet Union, they wanted to bring the America of Jefferson, Tom Paine, and Walt Whitman into the twentieth century. What was at issue was a basic disagreement about the meaning of America. In the Cold War at home the enforcers of the blacklist used their power to impose their view of who and what was American and un-American.

A key enforcer of the blacklist was Roy Brewer, the right-wing head of the Hollywood craft unions, during the forties a victor in the conflict with the reform wing of the Hollywood union movement, and a close ally of the mob dominated leadership of the International Longshoreman's Union.¹³ Through his control of the motion picture crafts unions, Brewer was in a position not only to prevent a picture from being shot but also to prevent its being shown, as instanced by his suppression of *Salt of the Earth*, voted by French critics the best film of 1955. *Salt of the Earth* was made independently by blacklisted filmmakers and was denied showing in the United States as a result of Brewer's threat that any theater handling the film would never again get a projectionist.¹⁴

Brewer played a major role in the other Cold War of my title, the conflict between Arthur Miller and Elia Kazan. For the record, Kazan had directed Miller's early successes, *All My Sons* in 1946 and *Death of a Salesman* in 1949. These two "minority men," as Miller called them, were close professionally, personally, and politically.¹⁵ The break came in 1952 over Kazan's naming of names. In that year even before Kazan's testimony, Miller had been serious about writing a play on the Salem

13. For insight into the relation between Hollywood labor relations and anticommunism from the 1930s through the 1950s, see Lary May, "Movie Star Politics: The Screen Actors' Guild, Cultural Conversion, and the Hollywood Red Scare" in *Recasting America: Culture and Politics in the Age of Cold War*, ed. Lary May (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 125-153 and Ceplair and Englund, *Inquisition in Hollywood*, *passim*. (for Brewer's role, see index entry under "Brewer").

14. Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes*, pp. 309-358; Deborah Rosenfelt, "Commentary," *Salt of the Earth* (New York: Feminist Press, 1978), pp. 93-168; Herbert Biberman, *The Salt of the Earth: the Story of a Film* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965). For Brewer's point of view see the interview with him in *Red Scare*, pp. 112-122 and his article, "The Truth about the Blacklist," *American Legion Magazine*, March, 1962, reprinted in *Thirty Years of Treason*, pp. 195-206.

15. Miller, *Timebends*, p. 195 and index entry under "Kazan."

witch hunt, a play with strong contemporary implications. In early April 1952 Kazan called Miller, who stopped to see his friend in Connecticut on his way to Salem to decide if he could write the play that became *The Crucible*. Kazan told Miller he, Kazan, had recently in secret session informed on dozens of people he had known in the Party fifteen years earlier. Kazan triggered intense feelings of sympathy and disapproval that were on Miller's mind as he worked through the Salem material.¹⁶ In 1953 in *The Crucible*, Miller powerfully undercuts the mixed motives of informers like Kazan, who as far as Miller knew informed one day and signed a half million dollar Hollywood contract the next. In *The Crucible* Miller also systematically skewers and turns against Kazan and others the public arguments Kazan used to justify naming the names of his former friends.

In 1954 Kazan's response was to do *On the Waterfront*, probably his best film and one that gives heroic grandeur to the decision to inform. In contrast to the film, which is focused and convincing, in his writing and interviews about informing Kazan is contradictory, illogical, evasive, defensively aggressive, and self-justifying. Although he is reluctant to admit it, even three decades later he feels guilty about naming names.¹⁷ In *On the Waterfront*, however, Kazan successfully channels, disciplines, and displaces his feelings about his own act of betrayal.

The key issue of informing aside, *On the Waterfront* is not only Kazan's reply to *The Crucible* but also his appropriation of Miller's *The Hook*, his 1950-51 screenplay about the waterfront, so that in the subtext of *On the Waterfront* Kazan doubly hooks and retaliates against Arthur Miller in their private cold war. The appropriation had real edge, since after his success with *All My Sons*, Miller haunted the waterfront, spent months with longshoremen and their families, and in 1946 had gone to Sicily to explore the Italian origins of the almost feudal waterfront hiring system. Miller was compelled by the possibility of a film that would expose the mob-dominated International Longshoreman's Union and that in opposition to the accelerating anticommunist, anti-progressive crusade would carry into the 1950s the democratic protest principles of the Pop-

16. *Timebends*, pp. 328-335. For Kazan's version, see Elia Kazan, *A Life* (New York: Knopf, 1988), pp. 449-50 and references in n. 17.

17. See, for example, *Kazan on Kazan*, pp. 83-101 and Kazan, *A Life*, pp. 432, 448-66.

ular Front. The film would center on Pete Panto, an almost mythical union reformer who bucked the mob, tried to do away with the degrading hiring practices, and mysteriously disappeared.¹⁸

In 1950 Miller had a script ready to show Hollywood producers and he had Elia Kazan, a director he could trust, a director with a strong commercial and artistic record. The two friends were well-aware of the odds against *The Hook* but they were both excited about making it. In Hollywood they approached Harry Cohn of Columbia Pictures because they thought his New York street-wise background and his desire to hire Kazan would make him receptive. While they were waiting for Cohn to decide Miller met and fell in love with Marilyn Monroe. Before Cohn reached a decision, Miller fled Hollywood to preserve what was left of his marriage.¹⁹

Miller and Kazan give conflicting versions of what happened next. They both agree that Cohn submitted the film to Roy Brewer for clearance and that Brewer had objections. In his autobiography Kazan, however, fails to identify Brewer as a right-wing labor boss for whom red-baiting was a major tactic in his fight with the Screen Writers' Guild and the progressive Hollywood craft unions. Kazan also neglected to point to Brewer's ties to Joe Ryan of the International Longshoreman's Union. In Kazan's account Miller agrees to make the few changes Brewer has asked for and then irrationally and inexplicably Miller at the last moment withdraws his script. In Kazan's version he and Harry Cohn are the good guys, Miller is the weak villain.²⁰ Miller, for his part, much more plausibly indicates that Brewer demanded an entire restructuring of the film. The corrupt labor bosses were to become communists, since as Miller reports it, Brewer insisted that there was no mob influence on the Longshoreman's Union. Under these conditions Miller simply withdrew his script. A sign of the times is that Harry Cohn telegraphed, "it's interesting how the minute we try to make the script pro-American you pull out."²¹

In 1952 Kazan submits to the "pro-American" ritual of naming names; in 1953 Miller stages *The Crucible*; and in 1954-55 Kazan retaliates with

18. *Timebends*, 143-177, 195.

19. *Timebends*, 299-308.

20. Kazan, *A Life*, pp. 410-416, 420, 426.

21. *Timebends*, p. 308.

On the Waterfront. Budd Schulberg, who had also named names, replaces Miller as script writer. Marlon Brando is at the center of the film but it also features a cast of former Group Theatre and left-wing artists who, like Kazan and Schulberg, had cooperated with the committee. Lee J. Cobb, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger not only give compelling performances but also they add the authority of their names to the pro-informer text and subtext of *On the Waterfront*. In contrast the musical score is by the unrepentant Leonard Bernstein, one of the 50 prominent "dupes and fellow-travelers" *Life* magazine had singled out in 1949 as people even more dangerous than actual communists.²² The film ends with the logo of Columbia Pictures, the Statue of Liberty in all her majesty reflecting back on the patriotism of the movie.

To succeed in getting it made, Kazan needed the cover of his cast and coworkers, all by now cleared and publicly repentant, with Bernstein there to endorse the film for liberals. The pro-informer theme provided Kazan with the patriotic, pro-American cover he needed to expose the mob-dominated leadership of the union. Between *The Hook* and *On the Waterfront*, moreover, newspaper and congressional investigations had confirmed what in Miller's script was ahead of the news, so the exposure, although dramatically effective, was also apparently safe enough to get by Roy Brewer. Karl Malden's role as a liberal Catholic priest provided additional protection against Catholic protestors. In a Popular Front film, Malden would have played a liberal lawyer or reform journalist who articulates the principles associated with progressive politics. Making him a priest is a sign of the times, particularly since Kazan personally equated the Catholic Church with the Communist Party and rejected both.²³ One of Kazan's central achievements is to locate the film not in a Congressional hearing room but "on the waterfront." Kazan, that is, shifts and displaces the informer theme from being overtly anticommunist to being overtly anti-mob, anti-corruption. In the film the Committee is not HUAC with its suspect agenda and authoritarian procedures but instead is the anti-crime commission. The procedures are democratic, the goal universally acceptable, and the investigators intelligent and above board, in contrast to the shady minions who clustered around the anti-

22. *Life*, 20 (April 4, 1949), 42-3.

23. Kazan, *A Life*, p. 422.

communist committees. Without actually saying so, Kazan through implication legitimizes the investigating committees, although he can always claim the reverse, that he is pointing up a contrast, not a similarity.

As they develop the drama of the informer, Kazan and Schulberg were especially successful in portraying the relation between the two brothers, the Brando figure, Terry Malloy, a working longshoreman and former prizefighter, basically sensitive but not too bright, and the Rod Steiger character, Charley Malloy, sharp, well-dressed, and the right-hand man to the mob boss, Johnny Friendly. Pushed by his love for the Eva Marie Saint character, Edie, and the moral arguments of Father Barry, Terry gradually follows the dictates of his underlying sense of decency and informs on his brother. Johnny Friendly then has Charley ruthlessly executed because he will not betray and murder Terry, so that the theme of betrayal and informing merges with that of the antagonist as authoritarian, on the model of the Nazis and Stalin. In the key scene between the two brothers, Brando gently brings into the open the way his brother betrayed him by having him throw the fight that would have given him his shot at the championship "You should have taken care of me then, you should have taken care of me." The affection, family loyalty, and multiple betrayals emerge to complicate the central theme of informing.

The subtext of this relation between two brothers goes back to the thirties, to Kazan's first success as an actor in Clifford Odets's *Waiting for Lefty*. With such energy that he became known as "the Proletariat Thunderbolt," Kazan played the part of a cabby who at a key moment exposes his brother as an informer against the reform union, as an agent of the corrupt union gangster, Mr. Fatt.²⁴ In *On the Waterfront* Mr. Fatt reemerges as the Boss, played by a hefty Lee J. Cobb, and the cabbie/longshoreman ends up informing against but also to avenge his brother. The revolutionary thrust of this act of informing in *Waiting for Lefty* is, however, completely altered in *On the Waterfront*, where Terry's decision affirms, not challenges the underlying status quo.

So, apparently, does the concluding scene, one that nonetheless invites interpretation. The closing tableau features a bloodied but determined Terry leading his men to a gate presided over by a fat, well-dressed ship

24. *A Life*, pp. 106, 112, 114; as "the Proletariat Thunderbolt" (from the *New Masses* review of *Waiting for Lefty*), p. 116.

owner. The gate opens, Terry leads the men through, and the owner closes the gate. From the official point of view, Terry's decency, determination, and fight are now harnessed in the service of a work system purified of corruption. The corrupt boss has been replaced by a new leader who does not challenge but reinforces the system. From another point of view, however, Kazan and Schulberg have preserved elements of their radical past. Viewed from the 1935 perspective of *Waiting for Lefty*, the concluding image disrupts the surface meaning, highlights Kazan's 1950s accommodation, and, from his days as "the Proletariat Thunderbolt," satirizes the overfed capitalist boss shutting in the workers who have followed a charismatic pied piper.

In his own interpretation of *On the Waterfront* Kazan to an extent supports both views. "What we intended to show at the end," he writes, "was that the workers had found, or thought they'd found, a potential new leader." In contrast to this affirmative view of the ending, Kazan goes on to say that "the boss in the doorway, to me, seems rather futile, when he shouts. The workers gather round Terry, as if they were going to continue their struggle. But after all they have to work for a living, they're not going into some intellectual state of withdrawal from it."²⁵ In his critique of the boss and his sympathy for the workers' struggle Kazan is still as he said "a child of the thirties."²⁶ But the idea that "after all they had to work for a living" also sounds suspiciously like the man of the fifties who informed to save his Hollywood career.

However we view the concluding scene, elsewhere in *On the Waterfront* Kazan has done justice to the mixed motives of characters as diverse as Johnny Friendly, Terry, and Charley and at the same time he has affirmed the moral strength of Terry's decision to inform. In contrast to the drumbeat of *names, names, names* in *The Crucible*, however, Kazan has totally eliminated this language and has instead stressed the more general theme of informing, so that he justifies his own behavior without raising the most troublesome issue, naming names. Except for the probably unconscious and disruptive imagery at the end, Kazan is not ambiguous about Terry's choice but he is not one-dimensional, either. To his credit he dramatizes the cross-currents of emotion involved for both

25. Kazan on Kazan, p. 105.

26. Kazan on Kazan, p. 26.

Terry and his brother, visually embodied in the fog that obscures the New York skyline and the smoke that hovers over key scenes, particularly when Terry is discussing his dilemma with Edie and Father Barry, who represent conscience and, in Edie's case, the power of sexual attraction. The smoke is both a realistic part of the winter scene and a visual sign of Terry's difficult moral choice. Similarly, the foghorns that sound in the background intensify the sense of stress. In one key scene the foghorn drowns out the dialogue between Edie and Terry, so that we have to fill in his unwillingness to go to the committee.

Just as *On the Waterfront* is Kazan and Schulberg's version of Miller's *The Hook*, *A View from the Bridge* is Miller's own transformation of his waterfront material. By 1955 for Miller the center of gravity has shifted from Pete Panto and the issues of individual courage, idealism, and integrity in conflict with a corrupt system. Instead, the politics of the play center on informing, on the tragic results of breaking the ancient code of silence and communal solidarity. From the opening scene this traditional Sicilian code and the terrible consequences of violating it are in the foreground. In the subtext is the Cold War issue of naming names, of betraying friends, a contemporary issue that gains heightened, deepened meaning through its association with the traditional set of moral imperatives. The contrast with *On the Waterfront* is direct, since for Kazan and Schulberg Terry's heroism and moral victory emerge precisely from his defiance of the code.

In *A View from the Bridge* Miller probes Eddie's private, almost incestuous sexual attraction to his niece and fuses this inner probing with the public, political concern with informing. As Eddie's thwarted sexual longing for Catherine builds through the play and as his jealousy of Rudolfo intensifies, the betrayal emerges inexorably from the very depths of his being. In *Timebends*, reflecting back on his 1946 visit to the ancient Greek theater in Syracuse, Sicily, Miller writes that "I felt something close to shame at how suffocatingly private our theater had become, how impoverished by a psychology that was no longer involved with the universalities of fate."²⁷ Talk about "the universalities of fate" can often be quite pious. Miller's practice, however, as in *A View from the Bridge*,

27. *Timebends*, p. 175.

gives the idea of universality the edge and bite that come from Miller's risky fusion of taboo sexuality and taboo politics. By that I mean that the theme of near incestuous sexuality was at the outer edge of public acceptability in the fifties, however universal and authorized by the Oedipus trilogy. Miller compounds matters by having Eddie misperceive Rodolfo as gay. To show it, the half-drunk Eddie kisses Rodolfo full on the mouth. This kiss, that sends shock waves through Act Two, was an especially powerful and daring achievement, an index of how deeply disturbed and wrongheaded Eddie is, a reminder that appearances are deceiving, that people perceive or misperceive according to their own needs and desires. In the fifties the charge of homosexuality was closely related to the charge of communism—the two often merged and both were emotionally loaded signs of un-American deviance. In this powerful, subtle, subtextual way, Miller again reinforces his pervasive merging of the sexual and political and exposes the danger of misapplying labels based on the perceiver's unacknowledged inner needs. *A View from the Bridge* is cleverly misnamed, since Miller systematically plays not on one view but on several.

Eddie and others, for example, misinterpret Rodolfo's singing, his skill at cooking and sewing, and his hip blond hair as signs of suspect sexuality. In dramatizing a contrast of cultures and the extent to which Eddie is out of touch with the older culture, Miller not only illuminates the situation of first generation Americans like Eddie but also perhaps by implication the contrast of cultures and values between the super-patriots of the investigating committees and Miller's own group of left writers and intellectuals. In the text rather the subtext of the play, at odds with Eddie's construction Miller makes Rodolfo an exemplary fifties American interested in sharp clothes, motorcycles, hip music, and consumption. Rodolfo is more in tune than Eddie with the emerging culture of consumption, another contrast of cultures in this play exceptionally sensitive to these differences. In this case roles are reversed—Eddie, the older man of the New World, is more out-of-date and old-fashioned than his young Old World rival.

In *A View from the Bridge* the challenging cultural politics of repressed and so-called deviant sexuality emerge not only from Eddie's depths but also they merge with what we might call the politics/politics of the play, the politics of informing for suspect reasons. Eddie names names to the

authorities and then desperately tries to preserve his own name. This word resounds through the climax of the play with the same insistence as it does as Proctor struggles with his identity and sense of honor in *The Crucible*. In both cases Miller dramatizes and judges the contemporary dilemma of informing and again Elia Kazan is a target, first because of what he did to preserve his Hollywood career by informing and then, I suggest, because of what he did in brilliantly twisting to his own purposes Miller's material in *The Hook*. Here is a final reminder that in *A View from the Bridge* as in *The Crucible*, Miller continues to wage a successful counterattack on both the public and private battle fields of the Cold War at home.