

AN OPEN LETTER TO MICHAEL TODD

In the public and the trade press Wednesday appeared a story saying complete artistic freedom for U. S. Producers and Directors is promised in Russia by Soviet Vice-Minister of Culture Vladimir Surin. And it appears that you, Michael Todd, are the first not only to take advantage of this offer, but have sponsored the Russian delegation and are encouraging Hollywood to follow a similar course.

As one who has but recently escaped from behind the Iron Curtain and who is thoroughly familiar with the workings of the Communistic mind, I say in a loud voice I wish the whole world to hear—Hollywood Producers and Directors should not believe and should not be tempted by such promises.

FREEDOM DOES NOT EXIST IN RUSSIA

Rouben Mamoulian and Pandro S. Ber- man were both at the party hosted by you, Michael Todd, for the Russian delegation. They are interested and asked intelligent questions, showing that they too have been taken in by the delusion created by these ministers of Communistic propaganda. I can say with definite certainty that these promises will never be delivered as written.

Artistic freedom exists in one country without question and that is the United States of America. Here a man can project his ideas as he sees fit and there is no censor, or gestapo, to strike him down should his ideas preach a doctrine of freedom that is contrary to ideological principles.

No man who has not been under the Russian thumb can possibly conjecture what it is like. I know. I have lived, suffered and by the narrowest of margins, escaped it. I have had artistic freedom here in the U. S. A. and I am telling my story on the screen in a motion picture feature entitled ESCAPE TO FREEDOM. Were I to attempt this picture

abroad, it would not be made and being made I probably would pay for it with my life.

If you, Michael Todd, want freedom of expression, don't look to find it in Russia. Having enjoyed it in your own country, and having earned a good living in the U. S. A., why don't you stay here and let your fellow Americans participate in the fruits and profits of your labors? Why give them to a power that given the opportunity would exterminate you as so much vermin.

Judas betrayed Christ for thirty pieces of silver. Are the Russian Kopeks any different from the Judas silver? Todd, man, wake up, don't be taken in by the greatest mass propaganda campaign ever conceived to despoil the dignity of man and enslave him and his progeny.

You say "I'm no organization man. I'm cantankerous and opinionated and I know what I want."

You cannot know what you will get and as to organization you will be organized and regimented as are all other Russian rabble, if you persist in espousing the deception known as "Complete Artistic Freedom in Russia."

Man, this does not exist. Our forefathers here in this great nation—America, risked their lives, their fortunes, their futures to found a new nation founded on freedom and the right of human liberty.

Don't sell your birthright or that of your American brothers for thirty pieces of silver.

Patriotically yours,

Stephen C. Apostolof

President, SCA Film Productions
Hollywood, Calif.