Freedom

"Where one is enslaved, all are in chains!"

Vol. II—No. 5 MAY, 1952 178 10c

Here's My Story

By PAUL ROBESON

THE OTHER NIGHT I was in Brownsville, a section of Brooklyn bordering on the Bedford - Stuyvesant area. Not far away is the church where the historic conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church takes place May 7-21.

In the modest home of a friend, a Sojourner for Truth and Justice, a fighter for the freedom of her people, I met with 30 or more working folk. They had come to chat about some things I had on my mind and some matters they had on theirs.

One mother and social worker talked of the terrible housing facilities for the colored people of the area. Rat-infested homes, no decent or safe place for the children to sleep—this one illustration was the key to a total picture. It could apply to sections of Harlem, Southside Chicago, Detroit, Memphis, New Orleans—wherever (and that's everywhere!) they have herded our people into the terrible ghettoes.

It was not surprising, therefore, to suddenly remember that there in Brownsville was the scene of the brutal murder of Henry Fields not long ago. This bad housing means a neglected and oppressed community — bad schools, inferior food supplies, bad health conditions, the taking away of eight years of the life expectancy of every one of our children.

THE CONVERSATION turned on how to do something about these bread and butter, roof-over-the-head problems. One basic need is the unity of the people. We need especially the unity of the churches of all denominations, because the influence of the church in the lives of our people is a powerful one. How wonderful if, mindful of this trust, the church would take the lead in the day-to-day militant struggles needed for a better life.

One working class leader in our discussion explained that the members of his union were the backbone of many of the churches, that they would go to their ministers and press them to do something about the living conditions of their flocks. The people need, not high-sounding words, but deeds —help in the daily living of our women and children, the key to our future as a people.

ANOTHER ROUSING discussion turned around the solidarity expressed to the colored citizens of the community by their progressive Jewish neighbors. Around many of the issues, such as the Fields murder, a close unity of purpose and action has developed.

I recalled to them how as a

(Continued on Page 5)

AME ZION CHURCH:

Its Historic Role in the Struggle for Freedom

See Pages 4 & 5

Five Years Is Too Long!

Drawing by Charles White

Mother's Day Resolution: Set Mrs. Rosa Ingram Free

By YVONNE GREGORY

PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—Orange, lavendar and purple paper flowers in red glass jars shoot cheery points of color into the small bed-sitting room. Between a big double bed and a window facing the clammy drizzle of early evening, sits a small, dark woman. Her deep eyes follow the weaving motions of her fingers as she clasps her knotted hands loosely in her lap. Slowly, softly, thoughtfully, she says:

"Sure. Yes. I've got letters from Rose since I read in the paper she was due to get out. She's been looking to come out since Christmas, but looks like something went wrong."

"Sometime I sit and think about my daughter and looks like sorrow just falls out so heavy on my heart. You sit right there now, I'll get the letters for you."

She goes to a drawer in a high chest, searches for a moment and then hands me two letters with the familiar pencilled writing. I have seen letters like these before. Postmarked Reidsville, Georgia—with the number 15208—they always begin "My dear belove mother," and they are always signed "to my belove mother, Amy Hunt, from your child, Rosa Lee Ingrom."

"Mrs. Hunt continues to search through the drawer for the latest letter and the two other people in the room are quiet, watching me read. One of them is Mrs. Retha Pitts, sister of Mrs. Ingram, and the other is her young daunghter, Anna Bell. I read the letter dated February 4, 1952, and these words reach deep into my mind:

". . . I am already worried about my little children. I want to be with them so bad. Sister (Mrs. Geneva Rushin, Mrs. Ingram's oldest daughter) says that they get along pretty well, but she won't tell me just how it is because she knows that it will worry me.

"But Mother I am praying to the good Lord to fix a way for me and the boys to go home to my children. Any little children need their mother with them. I hope the time ain't long now. If I can go to my little children I will be all right. I need to be with them children so I am asking you to do all you can for your child, Mother.

" I hope I will meet you all in life one more time."

Yes, something went wrong with the efforts to free Mrs. Ingram and her two teen-age sons. The Georgia Pardon and Parole Board declined to "make an exception to the established parole eligibility rule" which says life-termers must serve at least seven years. So this heroic mother, who resisted the attack of an armed white farmer, and her two devoted sons, who came to her rescue, must all remain in prison at least until 1956.

There are drawers full of Mrs. Ingram's letters. They date back five years ago to 1947, and the postmarks have been different only in that they have been stamped with the names of various prisons in the state of Georgia. Five years of grief and hope and faith cry out from these pages. And though I have never heard Mrs. Ingram's voice, it seems to be filling this small room in North Philadelphia. I want to open the window wide to the damp, raw night and let that voice sound in the ears of people everywhere. Surely, surely, if the people of this land could

(Continued on Page 2)

Negro Suffrage Movement—New Southern Revolt

By Louis E. Burnham

In 1943 when I sought to become a registered voter in Jefferson County (Birmingham), Alabama, I was required to "read and explain" Section Three of Article IV of the U. S. Constitution. The chairman of the board also wanted to know the difference between an appellate court and a court of first instance.

The fact that I "passed" the test was no tribute to my political intelligence. It was probably due to the fact that the registrar had gotten up on the right side of the bed that morning; or, more likely, that I fitted in to the insignificant number of Negroes permitted to "get by" in Birmingham and hundreds of Southern cities at that time.

Things have changed since '43.

Negroes all over the South were deciding just about then that their sacred rights of citizenship could no longer be left to the mercy and the whim of "white supremacy" bigots, but had to be won by organized and courageous struggle. And this decision is bringing about the most important political revolution of this generation in the United States.

(Continued on Page 3)

In Walks Paul Robeson

Conversation from Life

By ALICE CHILDRESS

Hey, there, Marge! That coffee sure smells good and I'll have a cup, thank you, because I'm going to sit with you for a while. . . . I just had me one experience. . . . Pour that coffee and then I'll tell you . . .

A couple of months ago I bought a subscription to a newspaper called FREEDOM. . . . Yes, that is a nice name, isn't it? Now this paper only comes out once a month so after a while the mailman leaves one in my box and I found it to be right interestin'.

In the first place, there was a piece by Paul Robeson. . . . No, not about Paul Robeson but by Paul Robeson with his name signed to it. Well I liked that fine because I am always hearing third hand something he is supposed to have said or thought or done and here at last I was getting it direct.

There was also letters from people all over the country and that was interestin' too because it's like bein' allowed to look at somebody else's mail and also makes you feel you had a neighborly visit with some folks without all the trouble of makin' refreshments for 'em. . . . Marge, I know coffee is high but I wish you wouldn't make it so weak. I can see clear to the bottom of my cup and I already put the evaporated milk in it. . . .

Well as I was sayin', the paper was very nice and told so much about colored people and even things about our history; but what was real good was how there was not one story about scandalism or divorce and neither was there unkind remarks about who was seen with who and why. . . . No, Marge, it is not a church paper, it is a newspaper but it don't print a lot of notoriety.

When I got to the back page I found a piece written about how they need money and askin' me would I send them some. Well I felt awful glowy that evenin' so I decided to be sporty and send them a dollar.

There was a few things about it which rubbed me the wrong way. . . . For one thing it is too skimptious. . . . almost like they was trying to save paper. . . . For another thing there was no society column and I like to know who gave parties and who had a tea or a club meeting and other things like that and also there was no recipe for me to try out. . . . also I don't see how come they don't have a crossword puzzle about Negro History or colored news but after all nobody is perfect and nothin' is one hundred percent so I figured that I got my moneys worth regardless of the circumstances.

I wrote a little note with it and told them how I liked the paper and asked them to print some recipes, a puzzle and some society news.

Well sir! Yesterday I received the paper and it is just

(Continued on Page 8)

A Mother's Day Resolution: Set Mrs. Rosa Ingram Free

(Continued from Page 1)

hear the voice of Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram calling to them from the Reidsville prison, they would use the power of their unity and numbers to set her free. If they could only hear her calling to her mother and to her son, Charles, as she did on Feb. 25, 1952:

"My dear Mother and Son . . . Listen, son, I am looking to go home pretty soon. I can't tell just what month yet awhile. So I still want me a nice sweater to wear when I can go. So if you send it size 40 and a tam cap.

"Mother, I hope I can go home to my little children. Sister say they is getting pretty. But I am worried about my children. . . .

"Mother, I want to see you so bad. I ain't seen you in a long time, Mother. I think of you so much, day and night."

There are footsteps in the hall as I finish the second letter. The door opens and a tall youth with familiar eyes comes into the room. When I have been introduced to Charles Ingram, I know why his eyes are familiar. They are like the eyes of his brothers and sisters down in Georgia.

Charles was arrested and thrown into jail when his mother and his two brothers, Sammie Lee and Wallace, fell under the horny hand of the Georgia law. But Charles was released and brought to Philadelphia. He has never returned to Georgia.

"He don't ever want to go back there," Mrs. Pitts tells me as Charles goes into the kitchen. "He don't even want to talk about there. You know he used to stay with me when he first came up here, and I'll always remember how he used to scrub and scrub his little face and hands every chance he got. Like he was trying to scrub that Georgia dirt off himself.

"It's a shame what they did to Rose," she goes on. "A shame. You'd wonder how folks could be that mean unless you came from there like I do. Then you know, all right.

"But people **all over** know about this thing that happened to my sister. They know if it had been the white man who killed Rose, stead of the other way round, **he'd** be walking around free right this very minute."

It is time for me to go and I leave the room with warm urgings to return and "spend some time" following me out into the chill night. I think over my parting words as I ride along in the train. I think of them now and I will have to remember them until there is no longer the need for me or anyone else to say to any members of Mrs. Ingram's family:

"We are going to keep on trying. We just haven't done enough yet. Tell her when you write to her that we are still fighting for her. But we have not fought well enough. We've got to do better.

"We've **got** to get her and Sammie and Wallace out of that jail."

HEROIC Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram and her sons Sammie Ingram and Wallace Ingram, remain in a Georgia prison because they defended themselves from a white farmer's assault in 1947.

MRS. CHARLOTTA BASS

Election Rally for Peace and Freedom

VINCENT HALLINAN
For President of the United States

Mrs. Charlotta Bass
for Vice-Pres. of the United States

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois
Mrs. Vivian Hallinan
Vito Marcantonio

Madison Sq. Garden

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7:30 p.m.

Tickets at ALP OFFICE
1484 First Ave. (77 St.)
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Prices: 60c, 1.20, 1.80, 2.40, 3.60

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Vote Row D

IN MEMORIAM

ANTHONY PAUL ALEXANDER

October, 1951 — April, 1952

. . . and the time shall come when every child born on this earth shall be able to grow up in a world free from discrimination, and live in a world at peace.

Negro Suffrage Movement—New Southern Revolt

(Continued from Page 1)

The first major successful attack in 1944. In rulings in two cases, brought by Negro complainants in the states of Georgia and Texas, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that "white primaries" were unconstitutional and that Negroes could not be barred from the only election that mattered in most Southern states.

As a result of this ruling and the unprecedented rise in numbers and organizational skill in the suffrage movement throughout the South, the Negro vote has multiplied five times in the past eight years.

A million Negro voters stand today in the South as a political army battering at the walls of lynching and mob violence, economic starvation, Jim Crow oppression and social abuse.

This army is not standing still. It is in a constant recruiting drive and its numbers are getting bigger all the time. Its leaders, drawn mainly from the sparkplugs of the NAACP and from professional men and women, has raised the slogan of doubling the ranks in 1952; the goal is to put into the political arena two million Negro voters in the vital presidential elections.

Dixiecrats Rant

Is it any wonder that the Dixiecrats are ranting and raging louder than ever before? Their tortured minds see distorted visions of "Negro rule" and "black domination." But, with every passing day, their cries become as futile as they are ferocious.

For opposed to the vision of this greedy minority is the splendid vision of the great masses of Negroes. It is a vision of full political representation for the first time in more than 70 years; it is a vision of sharing equally in the political decisions which the whole South must make, and having a decisive voice in the areas of Negro majority. It is a vision of democracy at work.

Voting Brings Representation

Obviously the tide of Negro voting in the South is not going to stop at a line which says: "You may vote for white Dixiecrats only." We already have plenty proof of the fact that the fight for the Negro vote is the first step in battle for Negro representation.

Rev. William R. Crawford of Winston-Salem, Dr. William H. Hampton of Greensboro, Dr. W. P. Devane of Fayetteville (all in North Carolina,) are members of their city councils on the strength of the Negro vote. In Nashville, attorneys Z. Alexander Looby and Robert E. Lillard serve on the municipal governing body; and attorney Oliver Hill lost in his bid for re-election to the Richmond, Va., city council by a handful of votes after serving a full term from 1948 to 1950.

For every Negro candidate who has run successfully another 10 have tried and failed. Last year two Negroes contested for city council seats in Jacksonville, Fla. In Tampa, G. D. Rogers made the race. The Memphis banker, J. E. Walker ran for the school board. Eleven Negro men and women sought state offices in Louisiana in January, 1952, including a candidate for governor, and in a dozen cities in North Carolina and Virginia, Negro candidates put in their bids. In St. John the Baptist Parish, La., a Negro, James La Fourche, served as a campaign manager for Sheriff P.D. Hebert who won re-eleiction against the opposition of big business interests.

This movement for Negro rewon re-election against the heights in the South in 1952. Already this year Negroes have run or are running for city council seats in six Virginia cities: Lynchburg, Roanoke, Norfolk, Newport News, Petersburg and Portsmouth.

Alliance Needed

Will this movement for the sufferage and for representation reach its historic goal? Or will it be cut down by an orgy of Klan violence as was the democratic advance of the Southern people during Reconstruction?

If the answer depended on the determination of the Negro voters alone, there would be no question. But the success of the right to vote movement depends also on the active interest and participation of every class and group in our nation which stands to benefit from its forward surge.

This means, first and foremost, the majority of white Southerners, who are also ground down under the heel of the Dixiecrat flunkies of Northern big business interests. The South needs modern social welfare legislation, protecting women and sharecroppers, Negro and white, better educational facilities and cultural advantages. These things will only come to white textile worker, coal miner, longshoreman, school teacher and housewife, to the extent that the majority of white voters join with the rising Negro vote to throw the racist rascals out of office.

And labor, progressive and liberal forces throughout the nation must have just as keen an interest in the Negro vote in the South. What labor leader has not said he would give an eye-tooth to see a Congress with no Rankins, Ellenders, Smiths of Virginia, Russels of Georgia, and Johnstons of South Carolina. Then, perhaps, we could clear the books of the Taft-Hartley laws, the Smith and McCarran Acts, and the like.

Well, nobody will have to spare an eye-tooth. All that's needed is tangible support now for the movement that promises to make over the South politically, the right to vote movement of the Negro people. In 1952 we will measure the claims of our friends against what they do on this crucial front: Negro voting and Negro representation in the South, U.S.A.

In another issue we'll have a few things to say about where they might begin.

Noted Lawyer Goes to Jail; Says Negroes' Fight for Rights Menaced

By LORRAINE HANSBERRY

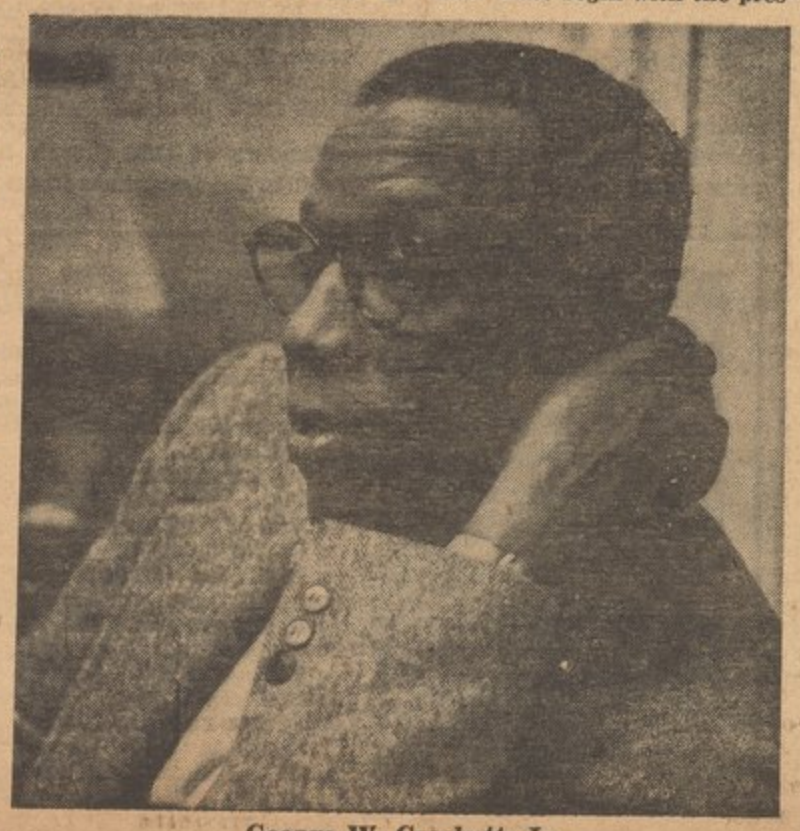
George W. Crockett Jr., the famous attorney, was about to start serving a four-month prison sentence when he granted an exclusive interview to FREEDOM. He and his colleagues who defended the eleven top Communist leaders had been sentenced for contempt of court by Judge Medina. I asked him if the Supreme Court's upholding of the conviction had special meaning for the struggles of the Negro people.

Mr. Crockett explained it this way: "Take a Negro in the South who has barricaded his house to keep a sheriff from illegally taking over his property. He is going to have a problem getting counsel. His chances of getting a white lawyer will be few, and a Negro lawyer will have to think twice before he presses any legal points for his client. In the back of his mind will always be this Supreme Court ruling which means he can be sentenced without a chance for defense or argument and sent to jail.

"The result of the ruling is to produce another source of intimidation to the Negro's fight for civil rights."

I thought of all the special problems and pressures that face a Negro lawyer in the U.S. to get training and to practice. I asked, "How did you, especially in view of the current hysteria, come to agree to become counsel for the Communist leaders?"

"I am certain that is clear to most rank and file Negroes that the present all-out attack on the Communists is but a prelude to an all-out attack on Negroes. Therefore the fight-back which must inevitably come must begin with the present fight for the civil liberties of the Communists."



George W. Crockett, Jr.

These are the words of a man who has become well known for his refusal to forget his principles or his people for the sake of a position. He was once interviewed for a possible appointment as U.S. District Attorney for the Virgin Islands. During the interview he was asked why so many Negroes in Detroit were Communists. In this instance, "Communist" meant any Negro who fought against police terror.

He answered, "I don't know anything about the Communists in Detroit, but I do know a lot about Negroes, and anytime a Negro boy is shot down on the sidewalks, you are going to find hundreds of Negroes in the streets protesting."

Attorney Crockett did not get that appointment.

"I have thought about the future and wondered just how it would be to live with yourself, if for instance you engage in red-baiting to gain a position. As a Negro I say we accept support from any group if that support helps us obtain our ultimate aim, which is our full integrgation into all phases of American life.

This explains something of the principles of this Detroit lawyer, a former senior attorney for the U.S. Dept. of Labor who became one of the head legal commissioners for Roosevelt's Fair Employment Practices Commission in 1943.

His principles haven't gone unnoticed by the Negro people, who also understand that the real meaning of the Supreme Court ruling adds up to the fact that most of our traditional civil rights organizations can become almost helpless in pleading the cases of Negroes all over the country.

The Michigan State Bar Association sent Mr. Crockett notice that he should show cause in ten days why he should not be disbarred from the state bar. Ten days is hardly time to prepare to defend a lifetime's work. **So George Crockett took his case to the Negro people.**

One Sunday morning a Negro minister stood up in his pulpit and said to his congregation of 1,200 that this man should at least be given time to prepare to defend himself. The congregation agreed and sent word as a body to the State Bar Association that this was how they felt. The Baptist Ministers Alliance did the same thing and so did the Negro Wolverine Bar Association of Detroit.

The result was the the Michigan Bar Association notified Mr. Crockett that the disbarment proceedings would be postponed, at least until he had served his time.

This kind of response from his people leads George Crockett to say today that the "little Negro"—the person in the barber shop or the grocery store—is way ahead of many of the leaders of the Negro people in their understanding of what is happening in this country today.

It has helped him to believe more deeply in his thesis that "The only way a Negro can find peace, contentment and happiness in this country, is to be knee-deep in the struggle for the full freedom of his people."

AME Zion Church Observes 34th Quadr

Bishop Walls Speaks For World Peace, Amity

A true son of his sturdy African ancestors, Bishop William Jacob Walls, Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church, does not hesitate to throw his energies into the fight, whether local, national or worldwide, for the advancement of the Negro people of the United States and the oppressed peoples of the world.

Born on May 8, 1885, under the shadow of Chimney Rock, N.C., the bishop has come up from nature's pulpit to become not alone a scholar, but a resolute fighter for what he believes to be right.

Fortifying himself with learning at great sacrifice early in his ministerial career, the bishop pursued the study of journalism as one of the weapons in his fight for his people. He took over the editorship of the **Star of Zion,** his denomination's paper, in 1920, and in four years developed it to such an extent that it became recognized as one of the most liberal religious journals of the day and exerted national and international influence rarely accomplished by a church paper.

He was chosen a member of the Central Committee of the International Council of Religious Education and the World Council of Churches, member of the executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America; was a member of President Truman's American Clergy Committee to European Countries in 1947 and is included in **Who's Who in America** (1948 edition).

The venerable leader does not

Bishop W. J. Walls

hesitate to support unpopular causes when he believes them to be right. When the pressure for the formation of the North Atlantic Pact was begun in Washington, Bishop Walls protested this action before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on May 16, 1949, because he saw in it "seeds of a grave import" to colonial peoples and a threat to the peace of the world.

Giving an impassioned plea for the right of self-determination for the exploited darker peoples of the world, he called attention to the inferred pledge of our country to support with guns, if necessary, the countries "which hold in bondage" millions of colonials in Africa and Asia.

"Through the power of its wealth in a near-bankrupt world," he told the senators, "our government is fast being tempted to become a colonial power."

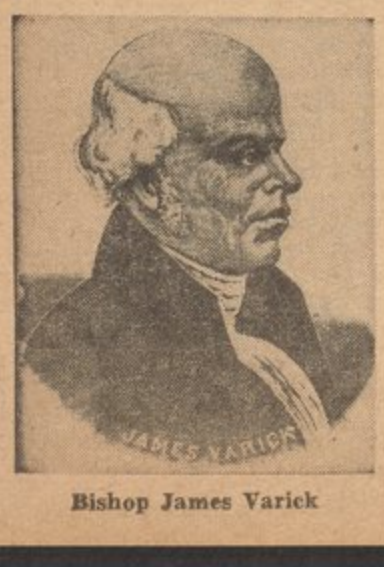
Citing the vast expenditure of the Netherlands "in their outrageous war against Indonesia, exactly equal to the amount granted the Dutch under the Marshall Plan," the churchman said, "we face the dismaying prospect of American substance, American arms and American boys being used to put down the democratic stirrings of peoples who seek today to accomplish the independence and freedom which our forebears could only win in a bloody revolution 173 years ago."

When the cry for peace was being attacked on all sides—in April 1950—Bishop Walls again took the rostrum unflinchingly to challenge the warminded. He told the Mid-Century Conference for Peace, held in Chicago:

"Our people's battle for full freedom is today the test of our country's reputation, of its claim to leadership. Because we know these simple facts of history, we know that the American people's insistent demand for peace in the world today is in harmony with our demand for freedom.

"We know that H-bombs can bury our country's destiny of full democracy for all in the same grave with our shattered hopes for full citizenship."

Bishop Benjamin Rush



Bishop James Varick

Church Always Led Freedom's S

Torn from their own civilization and land more than three centuries ago to face a new and strange world—in chains—our African ancestors soon threw themselves eagerly into the Christian religion to which they were exposed in America. They adapted this religion to their needs, and discarding the chaff which they found in their white slavemasters' actions, they embraced the wheat of brotherly love of Jesus and took courage and hope from His suffering and inspiring militancy.

Long before Emancipation, the Negro's Christianity became an important bedrock in his struggle for freedom. Many of our Abolitionist leaders—Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass and others—obtained spiritual guidance from the Old and New Testaments, and knew that, in the words of Douglass, those who would be free must strike the first blow.

The Negro church became part and parcel of the Negro people's fight for freedom and has remained in a position of leadership insofar as it has continued to associate itself with the aspirations and continued struggles of its people—for freedom and a better life.

Before Freedom

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, second Negro church organization to be formed in this country, came into being as a federated body nearly 50 years before Emancipation, although long before that time independent churches of this denomination had been in existence.

Rallying around Mother Zion Church in New York, the first denominational convention of the body was called there in 1820. At that time the convention was led by a white superintendent. Soon growing restive under white leadership, the church members struck out for themselves, and at the 1822 convention elected a Negro leader, the Rev. James Varick, himself a noted Abolitionist as well as a minister.

As with other religious denominations which grew up among Negroes, the A.M.E. Zion churches were founded to avoid persecution by whites.

The A.M.E. Zion Church, whose senior bishop now is the Rev. Bishop William Jacob Walls, can proudly boast of its early leadership of the Negro people. Only 20 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed, in 1796, free Negroes of the North sought religious independence in the establishment of Mother Zion Church, which is the rallying point for the denomination's 1952 observance of its convention.

Mother Zion

Mother Zion has a thrilling history in the Negro's progress in America. In keeping with its progressive past, its congregation is now led by the Rev. Benjamin Robeson, member of a distinguished North Carolina family, whose father escaped from slavery in the Underground Railroad. This family has also produced Paul Robeson, the minister's brother, upon whose humble head there is a present-day ransom for his courageous fight for his people.

The great Abolitionist Harriet Tubman was so impressed with the A.M.E. Zion church, whose conventions she attended, that she bequeathed to it her modest home in Auburn, N.Y. It was refurbished at a cost of $23,000 and dedicated as a national shrine by Bishop Walls in July, 1950. Another famous woman Abolitionist, Sojourner Truth, was an early member of Mother Zion.

Douglass with AMEZ

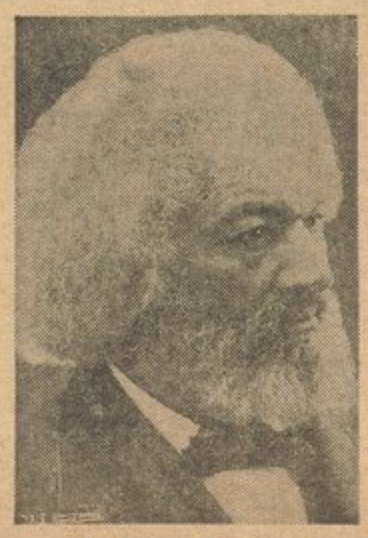
Not only this church, but the entire denomination has held its head unbowed in the never-ceasing movement of the Negro's struggle for freedom. It was in the basement of an A.M.E. Zion church in Rochester that Frederick Douglass printed copies of his historic newspaper, the **North Star,** which was a major influence in our fight for freedom from bondage.

Leaders of this church have been in the front lines in all the

MOTHER ZION, where first AME Zio was held in 1820. Today the church st the Harlem community, and has an enro

battles for progress fought by the Negro people as a whole. They were early leaders in educational activities, being among the first state superintendents of Negro schools in the South, and fighting straight through to the college level. As is well known, Livingston College in Salisbury, N.C. was founded and is supported by the A.M.E. Zion Church.

Born in the throes of slavery, nurtured in tears and bloodshed, the A.M.E. Zion Church grasped the leadership in the early days of the Reconstruction period following Emancipation, and is still pressing forward in the struggle for freedom for the Negro and colonial peoples the world over, and for a better life for all humanity.



Frederick Douglass

'Zion Church Helped Fr

One of the happiest times of his life, said Frederick Douglass, was the period he spent in New Bedford, Mass. and acted as local preacher at the little A.M.E. Zion church there.

That was in the years following 1838. By 1847 the scene of Douglass' activity had shifted to the Favor St. A.M.E. Zion Church in Rochester. In the basement of that historic church, which also served as an important station on the underground railroad, the early editions of Douglass' paper, **North Star,** was published.

The church's pastor, Rev. Thomas James, was a close friend of Douglass. He too was a runaway slave, self-educated.

Douglass told why he joined the A.M.E.Z. Church in a statement published in Bishop J.W. Hood's comprehensive history: **"One Hundred Years of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion**

Previously he had ...sc ture made to him by a r the Episcopal Church, ad can't forget that your ch baptize slave babies. . . . It

In his statement in Bish he said:

"My connection with t Church began in 1838. Thi my escape from slavery ar New Bedford.

"Before leaving Maryla ber of the Methodist Ch Street, Baltimore, and sho a branch of that church Mass., had I not disco pr prejudice and the u ol that church with slavery. a little branch of Zion

adrennial Anniversary

n's Struggles

AME Zion denominational conference
hurch stands proudly in the heart of
an enrollment of 6,000 members.

Rev. Benjamin C. Robeson

Greetings, Delegates!

The editors of FREEDOM present this two page tribute to the history and contributions of the second oldest Negro church organization in the United States. The devotion of its founders to the cause of freedom establishes AME Zion Church as an ever revered institution in the history of our people.

In this spirit we are proud to greet the delegates to the 34th Quadrennial Session of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church Conference.

Harriet Tubman Home Becomes National Shrine

The Harriet Tubman home at Auburn, N.Y., now maintained by the A.M.E.Z. Church as a memorial to the immortal "Moses" of her people, was deeded by her to the church in 1903.

In 1950 the home was restored and redecorated as a national shrine, at a cost of $23,000. The youth of the church were primarily responsible for this great service.

The property adjacent to the home, consisting of 25 acres, was acquired by Harriet Tubman in 1896. For years she had gazed at the land from her porch, dreaming of buying it so she could present it with the home to the church of which she was a devoted member.

Then she learned that the property was to be sold at auction. So determined was she to get it that she set out for the auction with very little money—but a plan.

This is how she did it, in her own words:

"They were all white folks but me, there, but I hid down in a corner and no one knew who was bidding.

"The man began down pretty low, and I kept going up by fifties. At last I got up to 14 hundred and 50, and then others stopped bidding; and the man said, 'All done. Who is the buyer?'

"'Harriet Tubman,' I shouted."

Then she hurried to the bank and got the money she needed for the purchase by mortgaging the land! Nothing was going to stop her, and nothing did.

Host Church Wins Broad Esteem

The First A.M.E. Zion Church of Brooklyn, host church to the 34th Quadrennial Conference, is one of the largest churches of the denomination with an enrolled membership of 4,500 persons. It has been pastored for the past 16 years by the Rev. William Orlando Carrington.

During its 67-year-old history this congregation has produced many leading officers of the church, including four bishops. They were W.L. Lee, 1916; P.A. Wallace, 1920; F.M. Jacobs, 1928; and W.C. Brown, 1936.

A small band of 15 souls received approval from the New York Annual A.M.E. Zion Conference for admission and established the Fleet Street congregation. They were all that remained of the original group of members who left Brooklyn's Bridge Street A.M.E. Church in 1872.

Mrs. Annie Walker, the last survivor of the group, died in Brooklyn Jan. 5, 1947 at the age of 101.

Under the dynamic leadership of Rev. Carrington, the present imposing edifice at Tompkins Ave. and McDonough St. was purchased in 1942. It was cleared of a mortgage indebtedness within four years and the mortgage was burned Oct. 7, 1946.

The church has won great respect in the community for its varied community programs. Chief of these is a day nursery for working mothers, which provides a complete health and educational program for 15 children daily. Organized five years ago, the nursery has a budget of $60,000 a year. It is headed by Mrs. Margaret Riley.

Rev. Carrington is widely known in church life, nationally and internationally, as a religious scholar who has won many prizes for his essays and other writings. He has taught theology to many of the outstanding leaders of the Zion denomination.

The father of five children, two of them married, he lives with his wife, Mrs. Pearl M. Carrington, at 694 St. Marks Place, Brooklyn.

HOST CHURCH. The First AME Zion Church of Brooklyn, where the 34th Quadrennial Session of the AME Zion Conference is being held. (Right) Reverend William O. Carrington, pastor of the 67-year-old church.

Rev. Wm. O. Carrington

Bishop Loguen's Name Honors Church

The eloquent voice of Bishop J. W. Loguen, thundering defiance of the Fugitive Slave Law, caused the citizens of Syracuse, N.Y. to declare that city a refuge for Negro slaves in 1850, a month after the infamous law was passed. Bishop Loguen, whose name will honor the A.M.E.Z. Church as long as history books are written, was a prominent Abolitionist and leader of the Underground Railway. A fugitive slave himself, he appealed to his fellow citizens to honor the Constitution by dishonoring the law that would re-enslave him and his people.

In his autobiography, **"The Rev. J.W. Loguen, As A Slave and As A Freeman. A Narrative of Real Life,"** he presents the speech he made at a meeting in Syracuse Oct. 4, 1850, that resulted in a vote of 395 to 96 for his plea of declaring Syracuse an "open city." Some excerpts follow:

"I was a slave; I knew the dangers I was exposed to. I had made up my mind as to the course I was to take. On that score I needed no counsel, nor did the colored citizens generally. They had taken their stand—they would not be taken back to slavery. If to shoot down their assailants should forfeit their lives, such result was the least of the evil. They will have their liberties or die in their defense. What is life to me if I am to be a slave in Tennessee?

"My neighbors! I have lived with you many years, and you know me. My home is here, and my children were born here. . . . And do you think I can be taken away from you and from my wife and children, and be a slave in Tennessee? . . .

"I tell you the people of Syracuse and of the whole North must meet this tyranny and crush it by force, or be crushed by it. . . .

"Mr. President, long ago I was beset by over-prudent and good men and women to purchase my freedom. Nay, I was frequently importuned to consent that they purchase it, and present it as an evidence of their partiality to my person and character.

"Generous and kind as those friends were, my heart recoiled from the proposal. I owe my freedom to the God who made me, and who stirred me to claim it against all other beings in God's universe. I will not, nor will I consent that anybody else shall countenance the claims of a vulgar despot to my soul and body. . . .

"I received my freedom from Heaven, and with it came the command to defend my title to it. I have long since resolved to do nothing and suffer nothing that can in any way imply that I am indebted to any power but the Almighty for my manhood and personality. . . .

"I don't respect this law—I don't fear it—I won't obey it! It outlaws me, and I outlaw it, and the men who attempt to enforce it on me. . . .

"I will not live a slave, and if force is employed to re-enslave me, I shall make preparations to meet the crisis as becomes a man. If you will stand by me—and I believe you will do it, for your freedom and honor are involved as well as mine—it requires no microscope to see that—I say if you will stand with us in resistance to this measure, you will be the saviors of your country.

"Your decision tonight in favor of resistance will give vent to the spirit of liberty, and it will break the bands of party, and shout for joy all over the North."

Prepare Me'—Douglass

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"It is impossible for me to tell how far my connection with these devoted men (pastors of the church) influenced my career. As early as 1839 I obtained a license from the Quarterly Conference as a local preacher, and often occupied the pulpit by request of the preacher in charge.

"No doubt that the exercise of my gifts in this vocation, and my association with the excellent men to whom I have referred, helped to prepare me for the wider sphere of usefulness which I have since occupied. It was from this Zion church that I went forth to the work of delivering my brethren from bondage. . . .

"I look back to the days I spent in little Zion, New Bedford, in the several capacities of sexton, steward, class leader, clerk, and local preacher, as among the happiest days off my life."

Here's My Story

By PAUL ROBESON

(Continued from Page 1)

boy I saw my father reading Hebrew, together with my brother Ben, now the Rev. Benjamin C. Robinson of Mother Zion in New York and a leading candidate for the bishopric at the Church's general Conference.

"Hebrew," I murmured, "the language of Moses." And how proud I was the day I could say in the language of Moses the opening words of the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." ("Bresheeth bara Elohim et ha shamayim Ve et ha Arets.")

This led to a discussion of my youth—a youth spent fully within the AME Zion church, and my conviction that this church would fight on such issues as those before us. Its history made this clear.

I recalled how Moses became a name for Harriet Tubman, a noble leader in the freedom struggles of our people. And Harriet Tubman is from Zion Church—a monument to her memory stands at Auburn, New York. Sojourner Truth was a member of Zion at one time and Frederick Douglass printed his paper in the cellar of a Zion church.

I RECOUNTED to this little group in Brooklyn, how my whole life has been spent close to this Zion Church. My father built a little edifice which stands today in Westfield, New Jersey. He deeply influenced many of the younger Zion clergymen of his some of whom later became Bishops, like the present Senior op W. J. Walls. I was for many years head of the Sunday School. I studied two years for the ministry, and later changed to the law. Often I took the pulpit for my aging beloved "Pop." The influence of his character, his self-sacrificing life will never leave me. He himself was born a slave, but he fought his way to freedom, to an education, to a full life in the service of his people.

And today I glow with pride as I see my brother Ben following in his foot-steps. My Pop would be very proud to see his son achieve the highest opportunity for service to his Church and to his people.

My own struggles today spring from this background. I am serving in my way, have served all these years, and will continue as long as strength remains. At one point I believed that my personal success alone would help my people. Many of us still look to this way of advance, still think that a few individual successes is the answer.

No! The good and welfare of all our fifteen million is at stake. That is the answer. The question is what happens to the millions living in official Jim Crow and facing "force and violence" in the deep South, the millions held back and hemmed into the Northern ghettos, all those denied opportunities. We must fight for them.

And so I left the heights of purely individual achievement to enter the day-to-day, the rank and file struggles of my people. I give of my talents and gifts to them. And I have been deeply rewarded by their solicitude, their concern for my well-being and for my right and opportunity to continue in the battle at a high level.

NOT ONLY MUST we have a new look at our leadership and "achievement"; we must also set new standards for our friends. Now our people have always recognized that we could not go it alone, that we must have allies in our struggle. But the question is what kind of allies? Half-hearted liberals who advocate gradualism and ride to public acclaim on the backs of "our" problem? Or modern-day abolitionists who go all-out for freedom now?

Our people today need friends the likes of John Brown, Garrison, Lovejoy and Wendell Phillips. We need friends who recognize the full stature of our struggle, who recognize, as in the 1800's, that our struggle has been—and is—the very measure of American democracy. They must recognize that until there is full freedom for all of colored America our democracy is a myth, a bad myth, a confusing myth.

We must all assume greater and greater responsibilities in the historic battles for liberation raging in the world—at home as well as abroad. Our friends must be measured by a new measuring rod. In this the church has mountainous tasks to solve, a contribution of staggering proportions to make. Unselfish, non-partisan unity among ourselves can assure a future of real brotherhood and human growth.

I was happy at the end of the evening in Brownsville to discover I had made new friends who will join a little closer in our common struggles. And I know they wish Zion well and look to it for inspiration, help and courageous guidance.

Freedom

"Where one is enslaved, all are in chains!"

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In the Freedom Family

Boston Concert Hall Overflows As Robeson Birthday Tour Starts

On April 6 the Paul Robeson Birthday Concert Tour got off to a grand start in Boston. More than 200 people were turned away as an overflow audience came out to pay tribute to the great artist and listen to his rendition of the songs of all peoples.

Delores Cobb

Accompanying Mr. Robeson on the program were some of the outstanding artists of New England. Miss Delores Cobb, noted coloratura soprano delighted the audience with her songs. Kenneth Scott, the 11-year old boy soprano was also featured. The youngster appeared in Finian's Rainbow, the Broadway success of a few seasons ago, and has also been seen and heard in numerous TV and radio shows. He is a sixth-grade student in Boston's Higginson grammer school.

Kenneth Scott

As Mr. Robeson takes up his nation-wide tour again in Cleveland on May 6 he will be joined by other aspiring young artists and musical groups.

In addition to the cultural program, the Boston concert featured greetings to Mr. Robeson from numerous organizations and individuals in the community. Students from Harvard and Wellesley, trade union spokesmen, representatives of civic and progressive groups expressed their appreciation for Mr. Robeson's leadership in the battle for a better world and made cash contributions to the United Freedom Fund, sponsors of the Birthday Concert Tour.

You will not want to miss the Robeson concert in your community or your area during the months of May and June. Be sure to get in touch with the local sponsors for details. Or write to United Freedom Fund at 55 West 125th St., N. Y., for details. The schedule of appearances is as follows:

PAUL ROBESON BIRTHDAY CONCERT TOUR

May 6	Cleveland
May 8	New York
May 18	Blaine, Wash.
May 20	Seattle, Wash.
May 22	San Francisco, Calif.
May 23	Oakland, Calif.
May 25	Los Angeles Calif.
May 27	Denver, Colo.
May 29	Milwaukee, Wis.
May 31	Chicago, Ill.
June 3	Minneapolis, Minn.
June 6	Philadelphia, Pa.
June 13	Newark, N. J.
June 15	Detroit, Mich.
June 20	Pittsburgh, Pa.
June 23	St. Louis, Mo.

LETTER COLUMN

Get It Off Your Chest

FREEDOM in Kentucky

Since FREEDOM has been circulating here, there has arisen a great curiosity about Paul Robeson, and much indignation because he is not permitted to go to Europe to sing. One hears talk of this in the barber shops, pool halls and restaurants—by people who did not know there was a Paul Robeson two years ago. And people are speaking out loud about things that they talked of in whispers two years ago.

Until recently most of us here in Lexington were little interested in what was taking place in the far corners of the world—except sporting events. We discussed, and sometimes cussed, race horses, pugilists and ball players. Now we are waking up. Occasionally one even hears someone say that they wish Paul Robeson could sing in the ball park here.

For several years we have been trying to elect a member of our race to the city council. Eventually we will succeed. The heartening thing about such attempts has been the white votes our candidates have received. The lily-white bourbons cannot much longer deny us our rights. We are waking up, and we are gaining allies.

A. B.
Lexington, Ky.

How Long, Oh Lord?

Drew Pearson, the columnist, says he is a Christian. He weeps when he talks of Christ on the Cross, the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments. He thinks the slaughter in Korea is a holy and righteous cause. He thinks it right to build the H-bomb.

How long, oh Lord, how long are our people going to follow such leaders—who quite properly belong within the four walls of the madhouse?

Otis W. Johnson
Spring Hill, Kansas

No Longer Fear

What does our great country expect to gain by sending handkerchief-head Negroes abroad to misrepresent the Negro and the country? It is foolish and hypocritical to send people like Mrs. Sampson to try to cover up what is palpably true—that Negroes are not given a fair break in our country.

There is no longer fear to die by the black man. Already he has lived through the pains of serfdom, fought, bled and died for democracy abroad which he is denied at home. He now feels it hopeless to fear any more or be made afraid by members of his group who for a small pittance betray and deliver him to his persecutors.

Arden Brown

Glorious Work

Enclosed is $1 for my renewal to FREEDOM. I am not sure whether my subscription is up yet or not, but it doesn't matter. Certainly I do not want it to lapse, nor for you to have to go to any unnecessary work to remind me that it is due.

It is a great and glorious work you are doing and every issue is priceless. Your help to the oppressed everywhere is an inspiration to all of us, gives us added courage to carry on and not be overwhelmed by the brutal attacks of the human vultures.

Barbara Nestor
Los Angeles, Calif.

Who'll Answer

I have purchased a small pamphlet entitled "Paul Robeson" by Lloyd L. Brown. On the back of it there is an advertisement for a publication entitled FREEDOM which I would like very much to obtain, but owing to currency restrictions between our countries I cannot send a subscription.

Do you think it is possible to ask one of your readers to send me a copy regularly and I in turn will send them copies of one of our progressive publication every week.

You might mention that I am a coal miner, age 21, and my chief interest is politics.

James Sutherland
193 Linburn Road
Glasgow SW2
Scotland

Urgent Notice!

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'Gold Through the Trees'

CNA Presents Exciting New Dramatic Revue

An African queen weeps. Her royal body, draped in beautiful queenly robes, sways in great movement of sorrow as she receives the news that her husband, the king, has been put in chains and taken away after a great battle. The strange wild men who chained him and touched his flesh and inspected his eyes and his teeth had called him by a strange new word: "slave."

This is the first scene of **Gold Through the Trees,** by Alice Childress, which opened last month at the Club Baron in Harlem. It is presented by the Committee for the Negro in the Arts, which in the past two years has given us **Just a Little Simple** and **A Medal for Willie.**

This exciting dramatic revue tells something of the history of the African people in four different parts of the world, in five different times in history—Africa, 300 years ago; Haiti, during the overthrow of the French planters and Napoleon's army in 1849; the British West Indies today; and the United States during slavery. It ends once again in Africa—**South Africa, April 6.**

There is the wonderful sketch of Harriet Tubman, who gives courage to a young girl whose hands are bruised and weary from the hard work needed to raise money for the abolitionist movement.

Hilda Haynes as "Moses" recalls her own experience of crossing into freedom for the first time and of looking up and seeing " . . . the gold shining through the trees." Miss Haynes, known as a brilliant comedienne, takes all the meaning of Harriet Tubman and plays it with homely power and a deep and beautiful sympathy.

Some of the best acting in the show is done by **Mrs. Childress** herself, in the scene of the Haitian woman who between shouting out her wares for sale, brings news and materials for the Haitian rebellion, led by "Father Toussaint."

There is the Martinsville mother, who is "looking for her son" who has been lynched. **Theodora Smith** plays the mother with tragic depth.

No small part of the power and high entertainment of this show is the singing of **Osborne Smith.** He has a deep, dramatic bass, which says as much as the powerful words of his Martinsville Blues. This song, which calls the names of each of the seven murdered men of Martinsville, is something to see the show for itself.

In fact, most of the sketches, if they had to, could stand alone. This is due to the effective staging by **Clarice Taylor,** the dramatic writing of **Mrs. Childress** and the excellent acting by the entire cast.

Hope Foye's beautiful voice is as rich and wonderful as the lovely Bantu love song, **Alundi,** which she sings in the opening scene of the show.

Allegro Kane is terrific in all the dances he does, both African and West Indian.

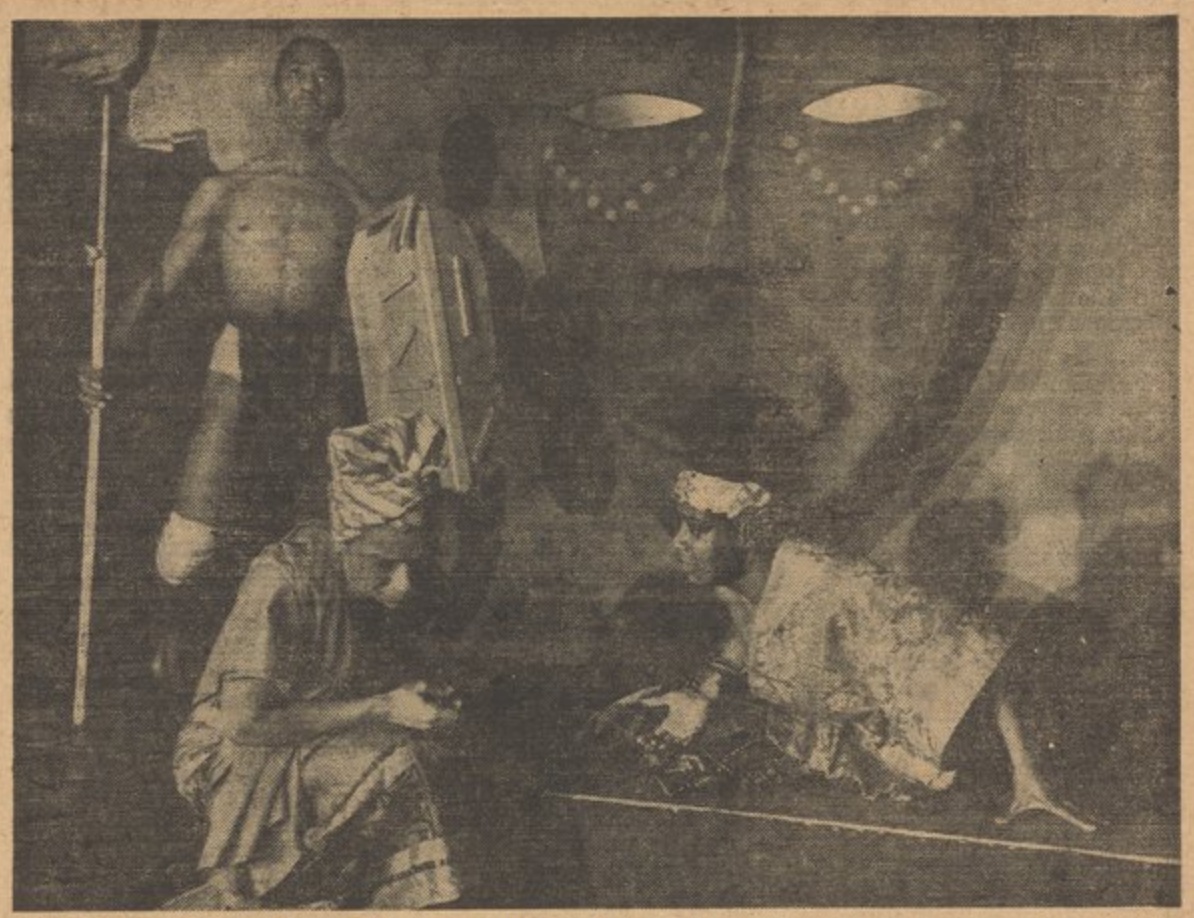
Hilda Haynes is wonderful again as the drama director in the West Indian scene.

Vinie Burrows is regal and grand as the beautiful African queen in the first sketch, who "dried her eyes and led her people."

Osborne Smith guarantees that you will not forget **Gold Through The Trees** in his closing African song.

Alice Childress seems to know more about language and drama than most people who write for the theatre today, and the result is that whatever its little weaknesses, Gold Through The Trees is probably the most worthwhile and entertaining show currently running in New York.

L. H.



ON STAGE—Allegro Kane, Theodora Smith and Vinnie Burrows in an opening scene from "Gold Through the Trees."

Classified Ads

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Conversation From Life

In Walks Paul Robeson

(Continued from Page 2)

grand as before, but they didn't take my suggestions and when I got to the back page I found another piece askin' me for some more money. . . .

Now you know, Marge, I don't allow nobody to play me for a fool so after I got through work this afternoon I marched myself up to their office on 125th St. to find out what they did with that last dollar I sent them. I had already given them one, for the subscription. . . .

Oh, what are you talkin' about, Marge! If they ain't shamed to ask me for money, I ain't shamed to go up there and ask them what they're doin' with it!

Well, the upshot of it was that I talked to the editor . . . his name is Mr. Burnham. After he heard me out, he took me in his office and showed me some of the business books. . . . I was too shocked when I found out that it cost $5,000 a month to put out that skinny paper. He told me how they have to pay for mailing it to 17 or 18 states. . . . He explained how much it cost for office supplies . . . rent . . . telephone . . . cleaning and a whole gang of other things.

Ain't that a sorry situation, Marge?

I had heard enough by that time to account for my dollar, but he went on and explained how they have one lone man workin' down South. He sees to it that folks down there gets to know all about the paper. It made me so mad when I heard how the law has already locked that man up because they figure as how the South don't need his services! **Now do you dig what's goin' on?** Yes, the

man is let loose now but he stayed right there and just keeps on sellin' his papers. . . . I had to cry, I was just that full.

As I was leavin', right that minute in walks Mr. Paul Robeson. . . . I could have died when Mr. Burnham told the story about me and my dollar, but Mr. Robeson just shook my hand and said how he understood and that after all a dollar is mighty important these days and especially if you live in Harlem.

Well that's all, but here's the point. . . . I want you to buy a subscription from me and also donate a dollar extra because Mr. Burnham said that if every reader would sell one sub and send one dollar, FREEDOM would be able to pay up all the back bills and face the future with a clean slate. . . .

No mam! you will not give me no dollar next week! You will do it now this minute. . . . Thank you, Marge, I know you will like the paper.

Lord, I sure wish everyone would send a dollar in right away! Do you think they will, Marge?

School Authorities Commit Crime Against Our Children

By CARMEN ALVES

Throughout the North and South, a crime is being committed against our children—the crime of dooming them to mass illiteracy. The typical school of the South is a one-room, Jim Crow shack; the school of the North—a decaying, overcrowded firetrap.

Frederick Douglass has left us the story of how he fought for his early education. As a small child he would exchange sweets with the white children of the plantation for their gift to him of a letter, a word, a sentence from a much cherished book. Later, in stealth and secrecy, he would visit the home of a free Negro who gave to the young Douglass the desire to learn, to fight for the freedom of his people.

Some 80 years later, after the struggle made by Negro legislators during the Reconstruction period for free education for all, our children are still being given the left-overs of education. Our parents still must fight for this most elementary of rights in a democracy—the right to equal educational facilities.

What of the schools of the City of New York—richest city in the nation?

Walk past the antiquated firetrap on 135th St. and Lenox Ave. This is P.S. 89, built in 1889 and so overcrowded that its school population is actually a school and a half.

At Madison Ave. and 111th St. is P.S. 170. This school with its predominantly Puerto Rican population is not only an eyesore in the community, but a health hazard to its children. In rainy weather, buckets of water stream in on the classrooms; the badly painted walls peel constantly. It is easy to understand why the insecure, poverty-stricken youngsters attending the school cannot learn in this forbidding atmosphere.

And here is an additional crime against our children. Dorothy Rand, for 16 years a well-loved teacher at P.S. 170, was suspended last February by the Board of Education. Her crime: she worked tirelessly and far beyond her normal school hours, together with parents, to bring about improved school conditions.

A few short blocks from this school is P.S. 184, on 116th St., housing over 1,600 children. It was built for 1,200 in 1901.

Here too, just last year, Alice Citron, for many years a teacher in the schools of Harlem, was fired by the Board of Education because she worked together with parents for more and better schools; because she challenged the Board of Education on the biased and prejudiced textbooks which undermine the concepts of democracy and equality that our schools should offer children; and because she worked to bring the study of Negro history into the school curriculum.

Another school, P.S. 186, at 145th St. near Broadway, is 50 years old this year, overcrowded, understaffed as all the rest. Last year, a 12-year-old child committed suicide in this school, a victim of the rotten Jim Crow conditions, the callous disregard of the Board of Education and the city administration to the special needs of Negro children.

Ancient buildings, overcrowded classes, inadequate supplies and textbooks, all have helped

THE FUTURE of thousands of youngsters like this young fellow will suffer from the critical situation of our schools.

create a situation where in one junior high school in Harlem, in tests given in March, 62 per cent of the children were found to be retarded three or more years in both reading and arithmetic.

In one elementary school, only 23 out of 200 children in a sixth-year group could read on a six-year level.

These alarming figures are representative of all Harlem schools—and they are getting worse. A recent study by the Harlem Council on Education reveals that the children of Harlem are faced with mass illiteracy unless drastic action is taken NOW.

All of this is true of the schooling given our Negro children in southeast Bronx and the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of Brooklyn—the firetrap buildings, the shocking retardation; the suspension of teachers like Mildred Flacks in Bedford-Stuyvesant and Arthur Newman in the Bronx, teachers who have exposed and worked to correct these shameful conditions.

To learn to read and write was a crime punishable by death for the young Frederick Douglass and for the millions of Negroes living under the slave yoke. Today the mere skeleton of an education is provided for our children—an education that would train our youth as domestics or for other unskilled labor.

We cannot permit this situation to continue. The widest possible support for decent schools must be achieved. The minds of our children, indeed their very futures, are at stake.

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