

# HANDS OFF BR. GUIANA!

## Freedom

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

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### Here's My Story

By PAUL ROBESON

(The column this month is being conducted by the outstanding anthropologist, writer and lecturer, Mrs. Eslanda Goode Robeson.)

#### The Committee Was Sensitive About The Negro Question

Well, THE MAN (Senator Joseph McCarthy) sent for me to come down to Washington to tell him stories about people I know, to say yessir and to bow down.



Now, I'm not exactly what you'd call a Yessir, Bow-Down person and I certainly don't discuss the personal affairs of my friends with strangers—even if the strangers are Senators or Congressmen.

So of course I didn't. Oh, yes, I went on down to Washington, at some considerable expense and inconvenience. But I didn't do any of the things THE MAN wanted me to do.

No. The MAN wanted to discuss the Communist question. But I wanted to discuss the Negro question, which is of very great and very immediate interest and importance to me.

And do you know what? I found that THE MAN and lots of other white people in and out of government are very, very sensitive about the Negro question. Yes, indeed. That very white Senate Investigating Committee got very nervous and worried when I started talking about the 15th Amendment and my second class citizenship.

They kept on trying to change the subject, but I kept sticking to it, and it soon became crystal clear that before any Committee starts yelling for first class loyalty and co-operation from me, they'd better get busy and put me and my Negro people in the First Class Department by making us First Class Citizens.

Some of our friends, Negro and white, wonder why we Paul Robesons don't just sit down and be quiet, make the big money and enjoy Paul's fabulous success, instead of raising

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### British Guiana Patriots



LEADERS OF THE PEOPLES PROGRESSIVE PARTY of British Guiana dismissed from their cabinet positions by the British are shown, left to right: Dr. J. P. Lachhansing, Minister of Health and Housing; Sydney King, Minister of Communications and Works; Linden Forbes Burnham, Minister of Education, Chairman, PPP; Janet Jagan, Secretary, PPP, Deputy Speaker, House of Assembly; Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Mines, Leader of the House; Jai Narine Singh, Minister of Local Government and Social Services; Ashton Chase, Minister of Labor, Trade and Industry.

### Labor Lowers Boom on Jim Crow; NNLC, Key Unions Hold Anti-Bias Conferences

Each day brings added indications that important sections of the labor movement are taking a new look at the divisive effects of anti-Negro discrimination and are making up their minds to enter the fight for equality with new vigor.

Faced with the entrenched Big Business outlook of the Eisenhower administration and its millionaire cabinet, labor leaders who have not worried much about FEPC in the past are beginning to realize that prejudice doesn't pay—at least among workers.

Most important, the pressure of rank and file union members, FEPC shop committees and local anti-discrimination bodies, and the militant initiative of not-to-be-denied Negro workers, is beginning to bear fruit in the higher echelons of labor's ranks.

Much credit for this development must go to the National Negro Labor Council. Despite all efforts to defame and defile it, the Council has been a prod to the sluggards and a goad upon the conscience of the complacent. It has rendered valuable aid to the unions in their fight to catch up with the soaring cost of living, and enjoys the enthusiastic support of increasing numbers of workers in basic industry.

The NNLC has just announced a new date for its 3rd Annual Convention: December 3-5 at the Pershing Hotel on Chicago's Southside. At the center of the convention deliberations will be a campaign against job discrimination in the mammoth railroad industry. All unions, organizations and individuals concerned with the question of democracy in employment

should contact their local Negro Labor Council or the NNLC national office at 410 E. Warren, Detroit, Mich., and send delegates to this vital convention.

As we got to press the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters has just concluded its triennial convention in Los Angeles with a strong blast against McCarthyism, a plea for a world disarmament conference, and a call for a national drive for jobs for Negroes as railroad switchmen, brakemen, conductors and engineers. The incumbent slate of officers, headed by A. Philip Randolph, were re-elected for a three year term.

A new development on the jobs front are the two national anti-discrimination conferences being held by major international unions. The million-member United Auto Workers, CIO, has just brought together in Detroit 400 delegates in a Fair Employment Practices conference to map out a drive to include a model anti-discrimination clause in all contracts with the auto barons, and support the NAACP crusade for "freedom by '63."

In Chicago on Oct. 30, 31, and Nov. 1, the United Packinghouse Workers, CIO, will convene a conference of workers from its shops throughout the country to heighten its efforts to eliminate Jim Crow hiring in the huge meat packing industry.

A new wind is blowing in the labor movement, a good wind. If it develops hurricane proportions, as it should, it can go a long way toward blowing down the temple of Old Jim Crow in the U. S. A.

### Protests Mount as London Overthrows Popular Govt. In South America; U. S. Supports British Grab

On May 22, 1953, just two weeks after the Peoples Progressive Party of British Guiana won an overwhelming victory in the first election under a new constitution, Drew Pearson, the U. S. commentator with a pipeline to the State Dept., declared that the only way to prevent PPP control of Britain's crown colony on the tip of South America "would be to take away the people's new political independence and restore the full authoritative power of the British Governor."

Now, five months later, British warships have steamed into the capital harbor of Georgetown, and 1,500 British troops have been stationed throughout the peaceful country. Behind this front of power the colonial office in London has suspended the constitution, ousted six PPP cabinet members, and searched the homes of some 40 leaders for "evidence" of a plan to "set up a Communist-dominated state."

The British had hardly moved in when the U.S. State Department rushed to the press with a statement of support for the dictatorial policies of her junior partner. William Percy Maddox, U.S. consul general in Trinidad, moved into British Guiana to "keep in touch with the current situation."

#### Progressive Landslide

Clearly the only "plot" afoot is a British one to stamp out—with bloodshed if necessary—the Peoples Progressive Party battle for higher wages, free trade unions, free education, better social security, housing and independence. This was the program by which the PPP won a landslide victory in the April 27 elections: 82% of the popular vote and 18 of 24 seats in the House of Assembly.

Following the elections PPP representatives insisted on their program in the legislative halls among the people.

They forced through legislation for better housing in a country where the sugar workers live in miserable "ranges," without sanitary facilities and without privacy, on mud floors, under leaky roofs. They fought for more education, in a country where "there have never been free secondary schools for the Guianese and 99 percent of the children attending elementary schools must pay for their meager education."

To increase self-government, they demanded that the British-appointed governor relinquish his right to veto bills, to control the defense, foreign and internal security ministries.

And they fought for a bill which would compel employers to recognize unions certified by the Labor Minister as representing a majority of the workers in an industry. It was this fight for a mild piece of social legislation—similar to our National Labor Relations Act—

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# First Assemblyman and Alderman Mark Growth Of N. Y. Negro Vote; Bid for Congress Fails

In the last article Mr. Cornish dealt with the relationship of New York Negroes to the Republican and Democratic machines in the late 19th century and the beginnings of Negro representation through minor appointments in the period leading up to World War I. This article deals with the first elective offices won by Negroes.

By FREDERICK CORNISH

Following the murder of more than 200 Negroes in the East St. Louis, Ill. riots of July 2, 1917, in which 6,000 Negroes were driven from their homes, New York's Fifth Ave. became the scene of one of the most stirring—and unusual—parades ever held.

On July 28, 1917, 15,000 Negroes marched down the great street to the sound of muffled drums in the famous "Silent Protest Parade." Organized by Dr. DuBois, J. W. Johnson, John E. Nail, the Rev. Hutchins C. Bishop, the Rev. F. A. Cullen and the Rev. Charles Martin, handbills titled "Why We March" were distributed to the astonished crowds:

"We march because the growing consciousness and solidarity of race, coupled with sorrow and discrimination, have made us one, a union that may never be dissolved in spite of the shallow-brained agitators, scheming pundits, and political tricksters who receive a fleeting and uncertain financial support of a people who ought to consider themselves as one.

"We march because we want our children to live in a better land and enjoy fairer conditions than have been our lot."

A little more than three months later, Negroes sent their first representative to the New York State Assembly. Edward Austin Johnson, a lawyer and an educator from North Carolina was elected on the Republican ticket from the 19th Assembly District. After taking office, Johnson sponsored the state's first civil rights law.

## Garvey Appears

That year Marcus Garvey came to Harlem from the West Indies and organized the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which around a theme of rising national consciousness was eventually to boast a membership of more than a million.

It was in the same year that



JUDGE HUBERT DELANEY

the militant magazine, "The Messenger" was launched, first as the organ of the Negro Hotel Waiters, then as left-Socialist organ of Negro labor and intellectuals. The Messenger Group, led by such figures as Richard B. Moore, Cyril Briggs, A. Phillip Randolph and Chandler Owen, was credited as being chiefly responsible in 1918 with rallying more than one quarter of the New York Negro vote to the Negro Socialist candidate for Congress, George Frazier Miller.

With the advent of World War I, a great demand for labor in New York led to a rapid growth in the city's Negro population of about 100,000; while there were more than 150,000 Negroes in New York City by the end of 1919.

That year, Harlem elected its second Negro Assemblyman, John Clifford Hawkins, a graduate of NYU, a lawyer and a teacher. George Wesley Harris, founder and editor of the New York News, and once editor of the Amsterdam News was elected the same year as the city's first Negro member of the Board of Alderman, running as an independent with Republican support.

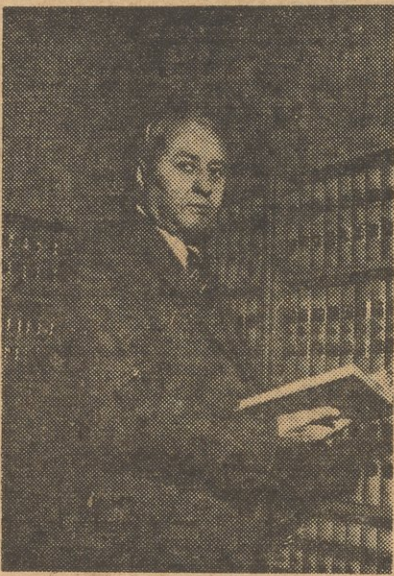
## Negro Doctors Win

In 1920, a long-standing fight for admission of Negro doctors into city hospitals was won when six Negro physicians joined the staff of Harlem Hospital. That year, another Negro Alderman took office, Dr. Charles H. Roberts.

In 1921, the first important Federal appointment of a Negro in New York City was made when James C. Thomas (currently Democratic Assemblyman from the 11th A. D.) was named Assistant U. S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York. The next year, Ferdinand Morton, by then already the most powerful Negro Democrat in New York, was named as the first Negro to the Municipal Civil Service Commission.

That same year, McDougald, was named Special Assistant to the U. S. Attorney for the Southern and Eastern Districts, and the next year was made Special Assistant Attorney General of New York State.

In 1923, for the first time, Harlem elected a Democrat, Henri W. Shields, to the Assembly, defeating Hawkins the Republican incumbent. The



JUDGE FRANCES RIVERS

nomination of a Negro for Congress was secured in 1924, when Edward A. Johnson, first colored Assemblyman, ran and was defeated on the Republican ticket.

In 1925, the Republicans recovered their Assembly seat with Pope B. Billups, but Shields went to the Board of Aldermen, replacing a Repub-



FRED R. MOORE

lican John William Smith.

In 1927, a militant, earnest young lawyer, Hubert T. Delany, was appointed Assistant U. S. Attorney to succeed James C. Thomas. That same year, Harlem elected two Negro Aldermen, Fred R. Moore, editor of the Age, and John C. Hawk-

ins. When in 1928, Oscar DePriest

## Movement for Representation is at High Point in Municipal Contests

The movement for Negro political representation is at an unprecedented high level in New York City. In 1952 it resulted in the election of attorney Julius A. Archibald as the first Negro member of the State Senate. In the current municipal campaign all legal parties have nominated Negroes for the powerful office of Borough President, thus practically guaranteeing that for the first time in history a Negro will sit on the decisive Board of Estimate.

The demand for representation is not confined to Harlem with its half-million population. In Brooklyn a young Negro attorney is making history with his fight to become the first Negro municipal judge of that borough. Here's his story.

In June, Lewis S. Flagg, Jr. announced plans to campaign as judge in Brooklyn's 2d Municipal Court District—the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of B'klyn.

A committee began circulating nomination petitions to put his name on the primary ballot.

## First Round Victory

Mr. Flagg was campaigning for the seat held by Benjamin Schor, appointed by Mayor Impellitteri last April on the death of Judge Edward A. Wynn. Although only 750 signatures were needed, Flagg's forces gathered nearly 2,000. Flagg won his first round in his fight to stay on the Democratic ballot when the Board of Elections sustained 907 signatures on his petitions as above question.

Then the wheels of the party machine began to turn. Action against the petitions was brought by Ralph Warner and Thomas Carroll, whom Flagg described as working with the

regular Democratic organization. They charged Flagg with forging names, accepting signatures from voters not enrolled in the party and accepting names of persons not residing in the district. A hearing was held before the Board of Elections and the complaint was finally withdrawn.

## 1,500 Canvassers

Meanwhile, a number of distinguished Brooklynites consented to speak at rallies and street meetings for Flagg. Campaign workers gathered during the day and evening throughout the campaign to canvass registered voters. On the Sunday before the primaries, 1,500 people campaigned house to house, in his behalf.

On primary day the official tally was Flagg, 4507; Schor, 4360. The anti-Negro machine had taken a beating, but would not concede defeat. Rumor circulated that 1,179 ballots were missing in 44 election districts. Schor demanded a recount of the ballots. He then sought a complete recan-



LEWIS S. FLAGG, Jr.

was elected to Congress from Chicago, pressure on the Republicans to nominate a Negro for the office from New York became irresistible because of the gerrymandered districting, it was considered impossible to elect a Congressman from Harlem, though there was a Negro population in the area of some 200,000.

This was shown to be true when Delany got the Republican nomination in 1929, and received about 99 percent of the Negro vote, but was roundly beaten by the white Tammany candidate, Joseph R. Gavagan.

Gavagan apparently used every dirty trick in the book to beat Delany, including sending school-kids with blackened faces into the white parts of the district calling for the election of a Negro Congressman and sending letters to white voters supposedly signed by Delany declaring "we are going to run out all the white folks."

Despite his defeat, Delany polled nearly 28,000 votes, or about 10,000 votes ahead of LaGuardia for the area. In addition his aggressive campaign helped elect two Negro Aldermen, Fred R. Moore and John C. Hawkins, two Assemblymen, Francis Rivers and Lamar Perkins—and for the first time, a Negro district leader, Col. Charles Filmore, who swamped the anti-Negro white leader of the district in the primaries.

was in 108 election districts making up the 2nd Municipal Court District.

Flagg lashed out at his defeated opponent in the primary, for trying to "thwart the will of the people and deny the mandate of the voters." "Any district leader who flouts the primary result insults the voters of the 2nd Municipal Court District," he said. "The discredited and disgruntled clique seeking to disfranchise the primary results have the brazen gall to intimate that Schor, not I, won the contest, and that I, not Schor, am trying to upset the will of the majority which voted in that primary. How stupid can these political hacks get?"

## No More Crumbs

After a 4-day court fight in which Schor had brought action in Supreme Court to upset the primary verdict, Judge Benjamin Brenner on Thursday, October 2 ordered a recount of blank and void ballots in the district, and recanvass in 8 districts. Now Schor seemingly convinced that his efforts to overturn the primary results will fail, is running on the Liberal Party ticket.

"Only too long have the people been told that we do not have the power and the strength to make demands upon the political party bosses—that we should be satisfied with the crumbs which fall from the table," Flagg said. "Victory in November can and will be achieved if the electorate will go to the polls and vote for me."

This will, indeed, be an important victory in the N. Y. Negroes fight against taxation without adequate representation.

# Freedom

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# American Women Join World Peace Crusade

When 1,865 visitors and delegates convened in the World Congress of Women in Copenhagen, Denmark this past June they expressed the will for peace of hundreds of millions of women in all parts of the world. Among the delegates were seven women peace partisans from the United States, among them the author of his article.

By Dorothy Burnham

It is a fine and heart-warming experience to greet and be greeted by women whose love of humanity has moved them to work together in the building of a great women's movement embracing millions of our sisters all over the world. And it is more than a pleasure to bring to the women peace fighters of the United States, fighters for the security of our homes and children, the deep affection and respect of the women of India, France, the Soviet Union, Africa—from all our sisters in the far corners of the globe.

Our delegation, though small in numbers, represented at the World Congress of Women the working women of the United States, the Negro women, women in professional and cultural fields, the foreign-born women, the peace fighters of our country. We represented the women who have been the victims of the Smith Act, McCarthyism, Taft-Hartley.

#### U. S. No Exception

Everywhere we went we were asked about the foremost peace fighters in America. The name of Robeson on the lips of any of us was an occasion for cheers. Do you know him? Please give him our love!

As the women made their reports on the economic conditions within their own countries, as they told of the starvation of children, of the long working hours for mothers and small children, they spoke bitterly of a U. S. foreign policy



MISS DAPHNE CAMPBELL, in addressing the World Congress of Women, described the struggles of women in Jamaica, B. W. I., for decent living conditions. She represented the People's Educational Association of Jamaica.

which prevented Marshall plan countries from importing the goods necessary for existence or exporting and selling on a free market the goods of their countries.

But had not the report from our own country carried an indictment of these very same industrialists, who have exploited the women workers of the United States for generations, whose Jim Crow hiring policies confine Negro women to the five lowest-paid job categories, where their earnings average less than half the salary of the white women workers?

#### Challenge to America

The mill-worker in Massachusetts, struggling to feed and rear a family on \$35 a week has much in common with the women carpet workers in Iran; the Georgia mother pushed off the farm which she has sharecropped all her life to make room for cattle and machinery, has a common struggle with the women of Chile who move down from the hills, driven from their allotments, to seek water and food for their little ones.

The degree of starvation, misery and oppression may be a little different; the name of the oppressors is one and the same. Our salvation lies in unity with these women.

Many times in the course of the meeting American women were challenged directly and reminded of their responsibilities. It was as though these women of the world were saying, "Sister, you've got to move a little faster, you've got to talk a little louder, you've got to bring the majority of the U.S. actively to our side."

#### A Story of Shame

I remember the afternoon the Japanese women paused in their recital of the barbarities visited on their women by the American occupation troops to ask: "Do American mothers and wives know of the way their boys are behaving?" And I had to answer, yes, I know that American working men and the sons of workers, deprived for generations of the right to decent human relations with their own black

brothers, are assured by "white supremacy" of the right to behave like animals where darker women are involved.

I thought of Mrs. Ingram, whose name had brought applause when mentioned, in the Georgia jail together with her two sons, for having defended herself from an attack by a white man. Mrs. Ingram and her neighbors, the black women of the United States, know the fruits of white supremacy. It is our duty, the duty of all women of the United States who understand, to make American women know in what

low esteem "white supremacy" ideas are held in the eyes of the civilized world. For are not our children, our sons, due a richer heritage than that bequeathed by James Byrnes and Herman Talmadge?

#### Why Russia Seeks Peace

And ever, as we discussed the rights of women, our thoughts and our talk would turn to the task of peace in the world. For we could not but realize that our struggle for medical care, for nursery schools, for decent wage scales, for food, for shelter, could only come to full fruition in a world at peace. For who could tell this story better than the women of the Soviet Union? They had made great strides, before 1941, in the building of nurseries, hospitals, schools and factories, in the winning of women's rights, only to see in five long years of war 17 million men, women and children killed and wounded, 1,710 towns razed to the ground, 70,000 small villages wiped out, 84,000 school buildings and 40,000 hospitals and medical buildings destroyed. It is no wonder that today as they bend their efforts to the rebuilding of their country, their first thoughts are—as are ours—of peace.

Large numbers of the women of the colonial countries, courageous and strong, having borne the brunt of the war-mad killers' savagery, could not even be present at the meetings. The women of Kenya who have seen their baby sons and daughters burnt and castrated before their eyes, whose villages have been destroyed wholesale, sent out their voices demanding

of their British sisters a fiercer struggle against war and colonial oppression. And from the women of Korea there was a special message to American women: "On behalf of the mothers of Korea, I call upon all of you, including the American delegation, to ask for an immediate end to this war. Only by fighting harder can you prevent your sons from being condemned, only by fighting harder can you prevent the senseless death of your sons. Only peace can insure the freedom of nations and the security of our homes."

#### What We Pledged

It was this certainty that here were women who represented tens of millions more whose sacrifices on behalf of peace are unlimitable—this gave us the greatest feeling of strength. And this strength was reflected in the words of our final report to the conference:

"We will leave this Congress with deeper and clearer understanding of the historic task that lies ahead and with inspiration of the heroic women to whom we have listened—knowing that what is at stake is the rescuing of all that is best and most truly American in our country and the peace and security of the world.

"Through their own experiences in struggle our women will overcome their isolation and fear, learn their own strength and how that strength is invincible when joined with the surging movement of women all over the world. We pledge ourselves, sisters, to this task."

## Hands Off Guiana!

(Continued from Page 1)

which led to the display of imperial force.

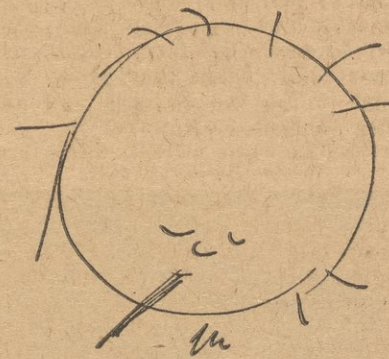
#### Money Grab at Root

At the root of the problem in British Guiana, as in all colonies, is imperialist domination and its inevitable consequences—poverty, disease and inhuman exploitation. American corporations in recent years have moved in to grab off an increasing part of the super profits derived from this exploitation. Anaconda Copper, American Cynamid, Aluminum Corp. of America and Reynolds Metals are among those extracting ore from Guianese bauxite mines and paying only nominal royalties to the people of Guiana. Gold, iron, diamonds and uranium add to the little country's attractiveness to the robber barons.

Typhus, tuberculosis, and diseases of malnutrition ravage the health of the people of British Guiana. Compared with an infant mortality rate of 32 per thousand in Britain and 31 in the United States, the rate in the crown colony is 100. Workers on the huge sugar estates, who have now gone on strike to protest the British subversion of their constitutional government, earn a meagre \$5.00 to \$10.00 a week.

#### Will the UN Act?

What will the so-called "free Western world" say of this latest act of British tyranny?



Labor members of parliament in London have expressed their anxiety over the severity of Churchill's actions. Dr. Cheddi Jagan, British Guiana prime minister, and L. F. S. Burnham, Minister of Education, have declared their intention of

placing their case before the United Nations. Already in the UN Trusteeship Committee, Jose Luis Mendoza of Guatemala has assailed Britain for attempting to "perpetuate the colonial system" on the Western hemisphere.

Guianese and West Indian leaders in New York have taken the lead in a rising movement of protest which is developing throughout the United States.

Twenty years after the American colonists secured their independence from the British Crown in 1776, the British seized British Guiana. It should not be difficult, 177 years later, for Americans to recognize their stake in the fight of the Guianese to exercise their right of self-determination.

## Mrs. Robeson

(Continued from Page 1)

so much sand about our constitutional rights as American citizens.

Well, its all a question of what you mean by ENJOY.

Personally, I wouldn't enjoy being all dressed up in Paris gowns, mink coats and diamonds, and presiding over a gorgeous mansion, if any old unAmerican could come along and lynch or rape or kill me—

as they tried to kill Paul at Peekskill—or could bomb or dynamite me and my mansion, as they did to the Harry Moores in Florida and other Negroes in Alabama, Chicago, and other points North, East, South and West in these United States.

No, indeed, I'd rather be all dressed up and living in my Civil Rights. I would feel safe and very well dressed if I wore my first class citizenship; that would be much more stylish and becoming and comfortable than anything else any American could wear.



MADAM RENEE FARRAGE, representing the Committee of French African Youth, told how malaria, leprosy, tuberculosis, syphilis and infant mortality decimate the population of French Africa, including her native land of Guinea.



# MURDER ON THE RAILROADS!

By JOHN. H. JONES

One night in 1933, Frank Kincaid, a Negro fireman on "The Creole," crack train of the Illinois Central line climbed into the cab of his engine as crews changed at Canton, Mississippi. For a moment he was silhouetted in the glare of light from the firebox and a shotgun roared into the night.

Kincaid's head was blown off. Gushing blood, he fell into the tender to die.

Kincaid's body was promptly moved. A white fireman took his place and "The Creole" pulled out for New Orleans.

A week later, Ed Cole, a Negro fireman on the same division climbed down from his cab to throw a switch at the Water Valley, Mississippi, junction. An automobile sped by and another shotgun roared. A huge hole was blasted in Cole's side by the buckshot. Again a white man took a murdered Negro fireman's place and the train pulled out for its run deep South.

These are just two of the many brutal murders of Negro railroad workers. They highlight today's struggle of the Negro operating and non-operating railroad workers for fair job practices—a struggle that has been going on since the turn of the century.

But these known murders which began just after the first World War are merely the naked terror end of a whole system of bias against Negroes.

## Brotherhood Agreements

The drive against Negroes really began to take shape and spread in the early 1900's. But first let's nail down the culprits. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers made an agreement in 1892 with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen to get rid of Negro firemen who were demanding their seniority rights of being upgraded to engineers. Then in 1899 these two joined with the Order of Railway Conductors and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen in getting rid of Negro porters on the Gulf Coast and Sante Fe. A third party to this plot was the Order of Railroad Telegraphers.

These "brotherhoods" of working men, excepting the

trainmen, were organized as fraternal societies and the Southern members argued that to admit Negroes would acknowledge their social equality. Meanwhile the 1899 Trainmen's convention called on the brotherhoods to "give . . . support toward clearing our lines of Negroes."

## "Cuban Problem"

The white supremacist attitude of the brotherhood leaders was disgustingly put in May, 1910, by F. A. Burgess, assistant grand chief engineer of the BLE. Speaking at its ninth bi-ennial convention in Detroit, Burgess explaining why the brotherhood didn't try to organize in Cuba:

"We did not organize any of the engineers in Cuba for what we considered the most excellent of reasons: that we were unable to distinguish the n---r from the white man. Our color perception was not sensitive enough to draw a line. I do not believe the condition will improve in a year from now or in 10 years from now or in any other time, unless you stock the island of Cuba with a new race, entirely getting rid of the old. . . . I hope the time will never come when this organization will have to join hands with the Negro or a man with a fractional part of a Negro in him."

Naturally the railroads were tickled by this anti-Negro attitude of the white workers and their leaders. In fact, they proceeded to use the Negroes as a club to beat back wages in general. The white workers and

their leaders instead of blaming and fighting the bosses took it out on the Negroes.

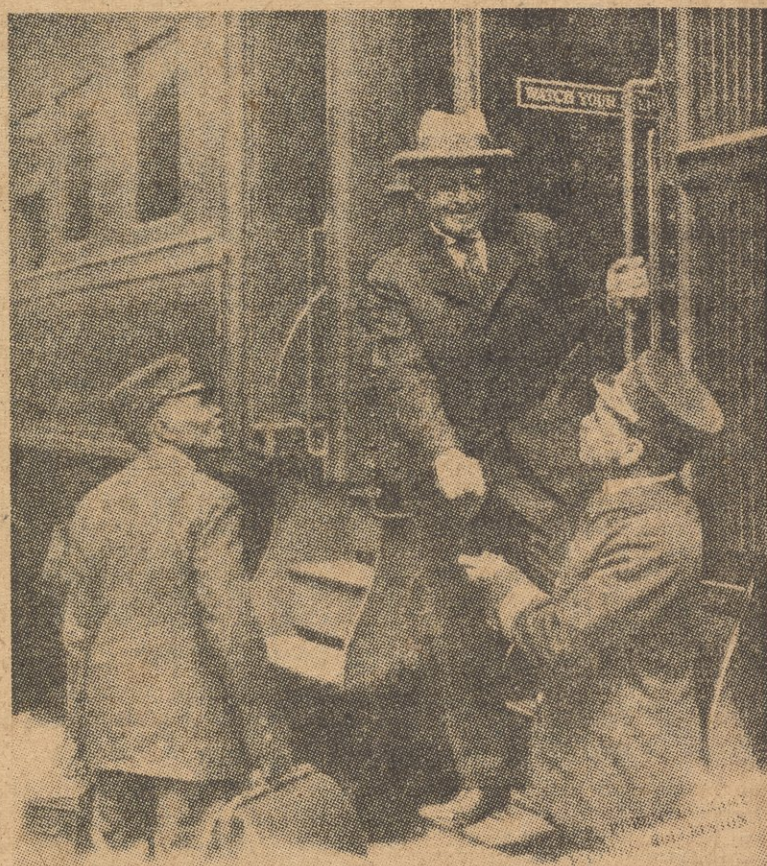
The struggle first broke out in 1909 when the Georgia Railroad fired 10 assistant hostlers of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, whose wages had been \$1.75 a day and replaced them with Negroes whom they paid \$1.25 a day. Thus the companies began pushing back the wages of white firemen.

## Two Wage Scales

Prior to the entrance of Negroes as firemen on the Southern railroads, firemen generally made 50% of engineers' wages, but in 1907 when the Southern engineers got a wage boost, the firemen didn't. Their scales thus fell to 47% while other roads were giving firemen from 53 to 60% of the pay received by engineers. Thus Negro firemen got \$1.75 for the same run white firemen were same run for which white firemen were paid \$2.27; and \$2.62 for a \$3.62 run by white firemen.

These conditions resulted in a strike in 1909 by the Brotherhood firemen, who demanded that the Negroes be fired instead of taking them into their union and fighting the companies for equal pay for equal work.

Just after World War I the white switchmen of the Memphis district of the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad struck to enforce demands that Negroes be driven from the yards. A few workers of the Illinois Central, the Frisco and the Southern Railroad joined them. But when the strike collapsed for want of in-



THE RAILROAD PORTER: These and other service jobs are held principally by Negroes on American railroads. But the railroad companies and the Jim Crow Brotherhoods have conspired to make them "non-promotable," thus consigning Negro workers to the lowest pay and most menial work for life.

dusty support, terror against the Negroes broke out.

Special agents reported plots to kill Negro trainmen who defied the terror and stayed on their jobs. According to the New York World of Aug. 1, 1921, a price of \$300 was on the head of every Negro trainman. The terrorists called themselves "Zulus" and sent letters threatening death to Negro trainmen.

## Klan Warning

Robert Grant, a Negro brakeman of Memphis was kidnapped at Lambert, Miss., while he and the white flagman inspected their train. He reported:

"They snatched my lantern and threw it away and had me march across the field about a mile. They asked me didn't I know that they didn't want any Negroes braking on the head end of those trains. . . . They warned me not to come through there again."

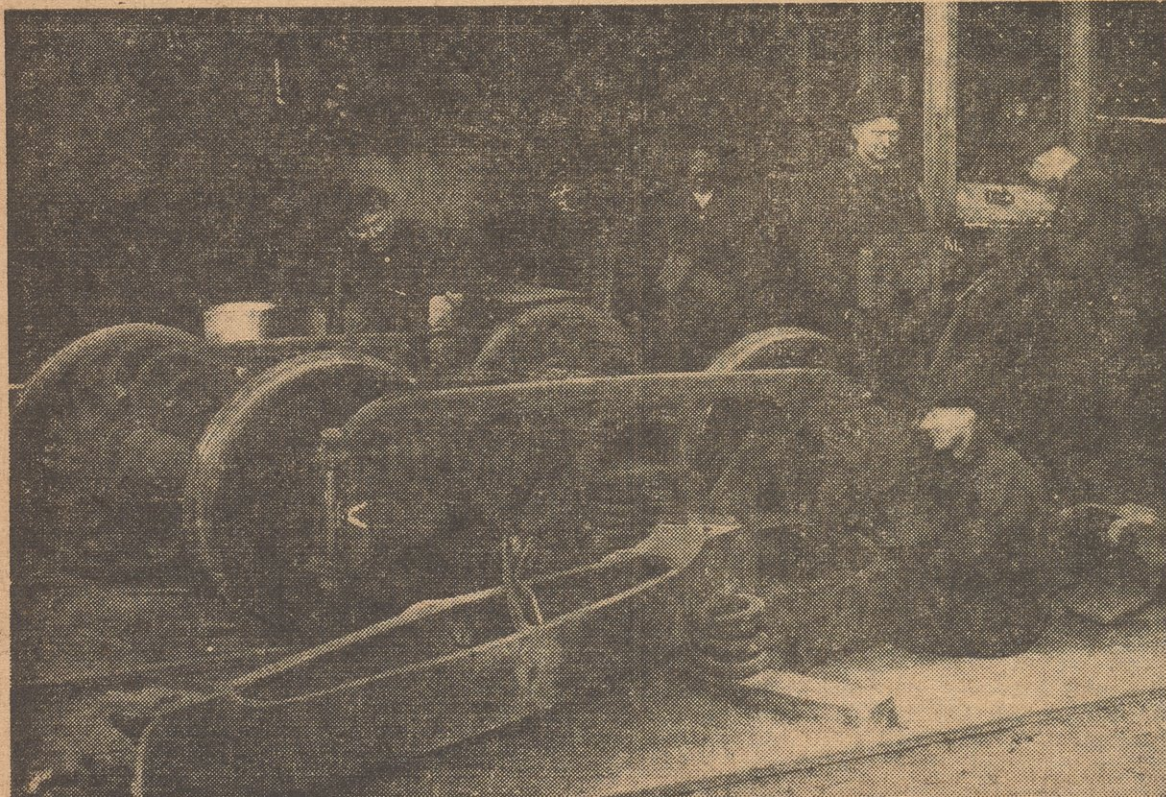
In 1911, the Cincinnati, New Orleans, Texas and Pacific Railroad, popularly known as the "Queen & Crescent Line," hired Negro firemen and a bloody strike ensued in which 10 Negro and white firemen were killed. The firemen's brotherhood, caught in the web of its own vicious prejudice, complained that since Negroes were barred from promotion to engineers, they were rising to the top of the seniority lists and were thus entitled to the choice runs. This forced most of the white firemen to take freight and local runs. But the white railroad managements and the white brotherhood leaders soon reached an agreement providing that Negroes not be hired on the line north of Oakdale and Chattanooga, Tenn., and that the percentage hired anywhere not exceed the percentage in service as of January 1, 1911, "pro-

vided a sufficient number of competent white men" were available.

## Post-War Drive

But after the war, a general decline in railroad jobs from 2,000,000 to 1,600,000 spurred a renewed drive by the white unions against Negro workers. And in 1919 when the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen threatened a strike on the Southern lines the U.S. Railroad Administration agreed to a new set of rules that froze Negroes out of promotions. One of the gimmicks of this new agreement was the consolidation of seniority lists of porter and brakeman categories into one on several roads. Generally Negro train porters—not to be confused with sleeping car porters—did the work of brakemen in the coupling and uncoupling of cars, head-end braking; handled some mail and baggage, as well as loading and unloading of passengers. But under this new R.R. Administration ruling, although the Negro porters got the same wages as brakemen for brakemen's work, whites were permitted to be porter-brakemen, but Negroes were barred from being brakemen and were frozen in their porter category.

The concerted drive against Negroes in the railroads continues even to this day. But the majority of Negro railroad workers are determined to stay on the road and win their full rights to make a living in the trade of their choosing. They have taken their cases to the courts, and they have organized themselves into associations for mutual protection. Next we shall see how the Negroes fought and are fighting for



IN THE ROUNDHOUSE: Negroes have been systematically pushed out of skilled employment in the yards, roundhouses, on the tracks and trains of the biggest railroad network in the world. In the early days of railroading Negroes performed all types of skilled jobs on Southern roads.



# NEWS

ON THE COLOR LINE

## Kenya Terror

A letter from Kenya published in London reveals continuing barbaric British terror in the East African colony: "children are burnt alive and women tortured, men are being castrated, women whipped . . . to force confessions that they had the Mau Mau oath administered to them by Jomo Kenyatta. In the Kikuyu country there are some villages in which the population has been completely exterminated."

## Sharing the Wealth

According to a conservative British publication, 92% of Liberian exports went to the U. S. A. in 1950-51, and 68% of imports were from U. S. A. "The pattern of its economy has been largely determined by American industrial and stockpiling requirements." Another indication of the "pattern" is the fact that in 1952 Liberia spent the meager sum of \$952,678 for the education of its entire population while \$1,140,220 went for the President's office, \$408,970 for his yacht and another half-million for embassies in London, Washington, Paris, Madrid, and the Haiti legation.

## Church Ban Holds

The South African government is holding fast to its decision to keep U. S. bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church out of Malanland. Under the guise of making the African AME church independent, they are trying to force the appointment of an African as bishop, with the obvious intention of subverting the church to the apartheid (separation) policies of the government through such an appointee.

## Terrell Fund

On Saturday, October 12, hundreds of distinguished citizens from all parts of the country gathered in Washington, D. C., to honor Mrs. Mary Church Terrell on the occasion of her 90th birthday.



In addition to extolling Dr. Terrell for her leadership in the fight against segregation in the nation's capital, the committee of arrangements announced the establishment of The Mary Church Terrell Fund. The fund seeks to raise \$50,000 to assist groups in continuing the fight to eliminate Jim Crow in D. C.

## "Free By '63"

In New York a special committee of the NAACP met to plan the drive for freedom by 1963 projected at the June convention. Channing Tobias, board chairman, announced that \$1 million a year will be needed for the campaign, and declared: "Our goal is an America of equality, opportunity, justice, freedom and security for everyone. . . . Our job will not end with the banning of segregation by court ruling or executive order, or legislation. . . . We must work to expand the Negro vote and make it an effective voice in local and state contests as well as in national elections."

(Continued on Page 7)

# Houston Was Advocate of R. R. Workers

When Charles H. Houston died at Washington's Freedmen's Hospital in April, 1950, the cause of constitutional and civil rights lost an eloquent and learned defender before the bar. But specifically the Negro railroad workers' half century-old battles for the right to work suffered a grave set-back.

It was Houston, more than any other single man, who as representative for a number of Negro railroad workers organizations and for individual workers laid bare and fought the cancer of the anti-Negro bars in the industry and the connivance between the railroads and the Unions to drive Negroes out of railroading.

A native of Washington, D. C., Houston was a graduate of the Dunbar High School, Amherst College and the Harvard Law School. He was Phi Beta Kappa man in college, the first Negro on the editorial staff of the Harvard Law Review, and the first Negro to win the degree of doctor of juridical science at Harvard.

In the case of Lloyd Gaines against the State of Missouri Houston won the first decision of the Supreme Court calling for "separate but equal" educational facilities. He was counsel for Miss Louise Kerr of Baltimore when the U. S. Court of Appeals at Richmond ordered the Pratt Library of Baltimore to open its training course to her on the grounds that a public supported institution cannot be operated like a private agency.

## Fought for Equality

In 1948, he participated in the restrictive covenant cases that won a Supreme Court ruling that Federal and State Courts may not enforce agreements barring persons from occupying property because of race or color.

Perhaps his most famous case for the railroad workers



Charles H. Houston

was the Steele case described in this series of articles on Negroes and the railroads.

Houston, served as special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and later as a member of its legal committee. He was a forthright opponent of segregation and was a member of the wartime FEPC. He resigned in 1944 after President Truman refused to allow the committee to issue its decision against the Capital Transit Company, which would have ordered that company to stop its refusal to hire Negroes on the streetcar lines of the nation's capital.

## Rejected Pussyfooting

Houston declared he resigned because of "a persistent course of conduct on the part of the [Truman] Administration to give lip service to the matter of eliminating discrimination in employment on account of race, creed, or national origin since V-J day, while doing nothing substantial to make the policy effective."

He was known as a "lawyer's lawyer" because of the painstaking and exhaustive documentation which characterized his work in preparing a case. But, as the Afro-American editorial pointed out after his death, he was not simply a "theorist. . . . He was a practical man who had the courage of his convictions. If he believed in an idea, nothing could sway him from it."

# Powell Comm. Exposed RR Bias

Beginning May 10, 1949, a Special Sub-Committee of the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives of the 81st Congress conducted hearings on the plight of Negro railroad workers. The hearings, chaired by Representative Adam Clayton Powell Jr. (Dem.-N. Y.), disclosed the following facts:

1. "The infamous non-promotable agreement entered into by the Brotherhood of Enginemen and Firemen and 22 southeastern railroads with the help of the National Mediation Board on February 8, 1941, has resulted in reducing the percentage of Negro firemen from 41.4 percent to five percent."
2. There were 6,505 Negro firemen on southeastern railroads in 1890; 4,897 in 1910; 2,060 in 1940. (It is estimated that today the number is less than 1,500).
3. On the Norfolk and Western Railroad 95% of the yard jobs were held by Negroes at the turn of the century; in 1949—25%. Similarly, with road service jobs the percentages were 90 in 1908 and 2% in 1949.
4. In 1940 Class I railroads in the U. S. employed 1,421,222 workers, of whom 127,642, or 9%, were Negroes. But—97% of the Negroes were janitors, cleaners, station attendants, red caps, cooks, waiters, train attendants, maintenance of way laborers and baggage room attendants. In all of the 111 other classifications recognized by the Interstate Commerce Commission there were only 4,015 Negro workers out of a total of 1,297,554—or three-tenths of one percent.
5. Of 46,185 conductors only 43, or less than one in a thousand were Negroes. And of 35,554 telegraph operators only 35 were Negroes.

## 'BEST KNOWN AMERICAN'

# Robeson Receives Peace Prize

Because many readers have asked us about the character and significance of the Stalin Prize which was awarded to Paul Robeson, we present excerpts from the statement made by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois at the presentation ceremony in New York's Theresa Hotel, Sept. 23.

## By DR. W. E. B. DUBOIS

At the celebration of Joseph Stalin's 70th birthday, December 21, 1949, the international Stalin prizes for strengthening peace were instituted. The decree of the Supreme Soviet said:

"The prizes are awarded to citizens of any country of the world, irrespective of their political, religious or race distinctions, for outstanding services in the struggle against the warmongers and for the strengthening of peace.

## Impressive Judges

The committee of awards was as follows: Chairman of the Committee: Dmitri Skobeltsyn, professor of Moscow State University. Vice Chairmen: Kuo Mo-Jo, of the All-China Association of Workers in Literature and the Arts (China); Louis Aragon, Author (France). Members of the Committee: Martin Anderson Nexø (Denmark); John D. Bernal (Great Britain); Jan Dembrowski (Poland); Bernhard Kellerman (Germany); Concetto Marchesi (Italy); Pablo Neruda (Chile); Mikhail Sadoveanu (Rumania); Alexander Fadeyev, General Secretary, Union of Soviet Writers; Ilya Ehrenburg, Soviet Writer.

The prizes for 1952 were awarded to:

1. Yves Farge, of France, who led the French National Peace Council since its inception.
2. Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew of India, Chairman of the All-India Peace Council.
3. Elisa Branco, Prominent member of the Brazilian Women's Federation.
4. Paul Robeson, the celebrated American singer.
5. Johannes Becher, leading German poet and public figure.
6. The Rev. James Endicott of Canada, a tireless fighter for peace and international cooperation.

In his book "I ACCUSE" he exposed the employment of the germ weapon by the "UN Forces" in Korea.

7. Ilya Ehrenburg, Soviet author and Vice-Chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee.

All of them received their awards in Moscow, with the exception of Paul Robeson, who was denied a passport by the United States State Department.

## A Great American

From these facts I think this audience will easily understand how great an honor has thus come to America, to the Negro race and to Paul Robeson. He is thus placed among the great men of the world and recognized as a prime mover in the greatest cause of our day, Peace. He is without doubt today, as a person, the best known American on earth, to the largest number of human beings. His voice is known in Europe, Asia and Africa, in the West Indies and South America and in the islands of the seas. Children on the streets of Peking and Moscow, Calcutta and Jakarta greet him and send him their love. Only in his native land is he without honor and rights.

Of Paul Robeson himself, I need add no word to this audience. He fought his way up from a large Methodist minister's family in New Jersey, through high school and college, at which the world heard only his prowess on the football field. He studied law and facing practice turned to Art—to the music of his fathers and the drama of life. He sang his way around the world and all over the Americas until one day in Paris he dared tell the black world never to fight the one nation which had legally abolished the color line. Here white America found the excuse it was searching for. It hastened to slander and imprisonment from the world this great American Negro.

Song on his lips he came;  
Song on his lips he went;  
This be the token we bear of him,—  
Soldier of discontent.



PAUL ROBESON IS SHOWN receiving from Howard Fast, distinguished novelist, the medal awarded to winners of the International Prize for the Preservation of Peace. In addition to the medal and a diploma, Mr. Robeson also received an award of \$25,000.



Editorials

Byrnes in the U.N.

PEOPLE ARE JUDGED, among other things, by the company they keep. Dwight Eissnhower made it plain in the first days of his administration that he did not intend to "keep company" with the hard-working, run-of-the-mill citizens of this land.

He filled his cabinet with an odd assortment of million-billionaires, their lieutenants and legal mouthpieces.

Now, by way of adding insult to injury, he has revived the historic marriage-of-convenience between Northern plunderers and Southern bourbons by appointing James F. Byrnes a U. S. delegate to the United Nations.

As if this were not a big enough blow to our world standing, the President has also added to the delegation Congressman James P. Richards of South Carolina. If Richards has any single qualification for the post aside from a hide-bound distaste for Negro equality, it has escaped us.

We are fast tiring of the prattle of the few apologists who are carving a queer profession out of pronouncing Ike's good intentions and imploring us to give him a chance.

Chance, indeed! If this administration gets much more of a chance to go free-wheling around the world it'll have the Negro people at the brink of re-enslavement and the nation knocking at the door of fascism.

Having no prospects of an early appointment and no special fear of Congressional witch-hunting committees, we must speak the truth as it is plainly revealed: The path to Negro freedom and to democracy at home and peace in the world is in direct and persistent opposition to everything the Eisenhower-Byrnes-Dulles-Shivers-Brownell-Talmadge-Lodge-Richards axis stands for.

School Segregation Cases

FEW ISSUES HAVE STIRRED Negro Americans so deeply as the current drive to eliminate segregation in elementary and secondary public schools in the South.

In December the Supreme Court will hear re-arguments in five cases brought by Negro parents to strike down the vicious system under which their children receive only a fraction of the educational oportunities afforded white youngsters.

Meanwhile throughout the nation funds are being collected to support the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in its conduct of the cases, public sentiment is being aroused, and November 15 has been set aside as a Day of Prayer for Equality in Education.

We are confident that the readers of FREEDOM will contribute their money and will urge their churches, unions and clubs to join in the home-stretch push to exact from the court a decision in accord with American constitutional guarantees and democratic principals.

Pamphlet Series Planned

WE ARE HAPPY to announce that Freedom Associates, Inc., will publish a series of pamphlets dealing with issues of concern to Negro Americans. First on the list is a collection of the "Conversations From Life," by Alice Childress. We're sure the booklet will be a FREEDOM best seller. Others will follow.

We can't announce publication dates yet. A little matter of money intervenes. But we thought you'd like to know about our plans—and perhaps join in in bringing them to life.

Frederick Douglass said:

"No right was deemed by the fathers of the Government more sacred than the right of speech. It was in their eyes, as in the eyes of all thoughtful men, the great moral renovator of society and government. Daniel Webster called it homebred right, a fireside privilege. Liberty is meaningless where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist. That, of all rights, is the dread of tyrants. It is the right which they first of all strike down."

—A Plea for Speech in Boston, Dec. 10, 1860



FROM ALL PARTS OF NIGERIA, West Africa, more than 400 women gathered for a conference of the All-Nigerian Women's Movement in August. Delegates are shown in front of Centenary Hall, Abeokuta, Nigeria.

Women of Nigeria Meet in a Historic National Conference

Wherever national liberation movements are on the upswing in colonial lands, women are surging forward to a new position in society. The national consciousness which drives a people to take their destiny into their own hands naturally dictates that women be freed from the fetters imposed on them by feudal and imperialist domination.

Thus women everywhere take their places in the front ranks of the struggle against foreign oppression and for self-determination. A striking example of this is the recent announcement that in China, where women were held in unbelievable bondage for centuries, the Peoples Democratic Government has appointed a thousand women judges to expedite the affairs of the courts.

Africa is no exception to this world-wide ferment among women. We are proud to present, exclusively in the United States, a first-hand account of a recent national conference of the women of Nigeria, West Africa. Led by Mrs. Fumilayo Kuti, who was elected in June a vice-president of the World Congress of Women, the conference described in this article marks, we believe, a historic departure in the struggle for Nigerian independence.

Special Correspondence

Abeokuta, Nigeria, August, 1953—Over four hundred women from different parts of the country were participants at the conference of All-Nigerian Womens' Movements which was held at Centenary Hall here this month.

Welcoming the delegates to the two-day conference which was sponsored by the Nigerian Women's Union, its leader, Mrs. Fumilayo Kuti said, amid great applause: "It is important that we get together to know one another, to know that we are friends and we belong to one country."

"Women in Nigeria," Mrs. Kuti continued, "lag behind. It is time we took our place among other women all over the world." The unity of the country, she stressed is imperative, and urged the women to work as hard as the men in the fight for independence.

Give and Take

It is significant that while the women met the Nationalist leaders of Nigeria had gone to London for talks with the British authorities in what they described as a mission of "give and take" and "good spirits." Actually they connived with the British to perpetuate the splitting of the country into five warring areas: Lagos as a federal capital; the Western, Eastern, Northern, and the Southern Cameroons Region.

(One of the biggest barriers to Nigeria's emergence as a nation is the British-fostered division into regions based on language, religious and tribal differences.)

The women's conference struck a blow against disunity. During the sessions I saw delegates exchanging fraternal greetings from all corners of the hall.

Break Language Barrier

One of the delegates told me: "To say that there is no unity in our country is a lie. It is the imperialists and their

stooges who use such false propaganda to satisfy their selfish ends. . . . Despite the fact that we come from different places and do not understand each other's languages, we held our discussions successfully. This is simply because we are fighting for one common cause. We have discussed, dined and done everything together; this is for the future of women, children and our beloved country."

Women Jailed

The conference adopted resolutions demanding: universal adult suffrage throughout the country; one-third of the seats in the legislative Houses for women; development of town and village communities; a public health program and mass education for children, youth and women.

The town of Abeokuta is one of the largest and most significant in the history of West Africa. Like the heroic people of Metabela and the Zulus of South Africa, the people of Abeokuta also played a leading role in the fight for independence. In the latter part of the last century they were the most courageous and desperate in resisting the British armed forces who sought to subjugate the people of Nigeria.

A few years ago, under the leadership of the Nigerian Women's Union, the people forced from his throne the Alake of Abeokuta, one of the most powerful and despotic Obas (Chiefs) in Western Nigeria. He had instituted undemocratic laws against the peoples' interest. After fifteen months in exile, the Alake returned to office with the full backing, of course, of the British authorities. Early this year he sentenced over forty women to various terms of imprisonment for organizing a resistance movement and refusing to pay an exorbitant tax and water-rate.

But the Alake, with all the influence of the British rulers behind him, could not stop the great conference of women at Abeokuta. A new day is dawning for the women, and people, of Nigeria.



Madame Ransom-Kuti



# NEWS

ON THE COLOR LINE

(Continued from Page 5)

## Labor-Negro Unity Scores

A united front of labor and Negro forces in Detroit won the sixth highest vote for State Senator Charles Diggs in a field of 18 candidates who qualified in the recent primary to battle it out for nine seats on the city council. Detroit's rapidly growing Negro population of over 400,000 (nearly one-fourth of the total) has never had representation on the powerful Common Council. Today, as a result of a joint Negro-labor slate, the chances look better than ever.

## Hospital Fight Continues

The "Citizens Committee for a Bedford-Stuyvesant Hospital Site Now" is rallying all of Brooklyn to force the N. Y. city administration to follow through on a promise for a hospital in the crowded Bedford-Stuyvesant area. The city, under pressure, allocated \$1,250,000 for the hospital but the Budget Director and Real Estate Bureau are holding up action by refusal to purchase a site selected by the City Planning Commission.

## A Living Death

Wesley Robert Wells, frame-up victim, has spent 25 years in prison, the last six in the death House at San Quentin, Calif., waiting execution because he threw a cuspidor at a guard. "Though only 19 when I first entered prison," he has written, "I didn't then, nor do I today, believe the mere pigmentation of my skin made me inferior to any man." For facts about the amazing case of Wesley Robert Wells, and to help in the fight to save him from a living death, you can write to the Trade Union Committee to Save the Life of Wesley Robert Wells, 326 West 3rd Street, Los Angeles 13, Calif.



## Agricultural Workers

Three thousand Louisiana plantation workers went on strike this month to win the right to organize. The National Agricultural Workers Union, AFL, has asked Labor Secretary J. P. Mitchell to influence farm corporations to settle with the workers who have been subjected to a reign of terror.

## Southside Novel

Gwendolyn Brooks, poet and Pulitzer prize winner, has just published her first novel. Entitled "Maude Martha," the book deals with life on Chicago's teeming Southside.



HOMES INSTEAD OF TANKS



THE FACES ABOVE are not those of FREEDOM staff members. But we are looking just as intently—and confidently—toward the future because you, the readers, have made it possible. This little story tells how.

## JUST BETWEEN US

# A Word of Thanks — A Call for Help

By Kathryn Cooper

It was a Monday morning—kind of blue; the 21st day of September, and no paper out yet.

The postman entered. "It's three-twenty today," he said, and patiently waited while we checked the petty cash box and withdrew the \$4.00 lying there.

Our heart was lighter now. To pay that much for the chunky pack of incoming letters meant that our readers were beginning to respond to our appeal.

The envelopes were post-marked Calif., Ill., Mich., Va., N. C., Ohio, Fla., N. Y., La., and Minn. And the notes attached to renewals and donations gave us an extra lift:

"Forgive carelessness—enclosed find \$2.00 for renewal."

"Keep up the good work."

"We can't do without our FREEDOM."

"It certainly was an oversight. Can't live without FREEDOM! Thanks for reminding me. Congratulations for your fine work, and special love to Paul!"

"Please renew for two years and accept my apologies for overlooking renewal until now. FREEDOM is important to me and I can't do without it."

"Certainly don't want to miss the most wonderful periodical of its kind."

"Please renew, thank you for a fine paper."

"Here's my buck—keep up the good work for another year."

"Please excuse my negligence. I'm really sorry for the delay in renewing my sub. FREEDOM is indeed a fine contribution to the struggle for human rights. Please keep me on the mailing list."

Then there was a dollar in a tiny envelope, and written on the outside—"Keep it rolling!"

"I'm 68," a reader wrote, "and live off a very small pension—

but FREEDOM can't die. Here's \$1.00 as a contribution—wish it were more."

And on the local scene, friends gathered at a surprise party in Brooklyn and donated \$10. Our ace salesman contributed \$3. \$460 was pledged and \$360 paid in a week's time by a group of eight responding to a call for an emergency meeting. A reader from Chicago visited the office during the crisis, went back home and sent \$50 from the Windy City. Freedom Associates of Detroit pitched in with \$25.

And now here we are: our Freedom Family back together again; the September issue out even though it is mid-October!

Another issue (October) will be coming to you before the end of the month. Then, during November there'll be two more issues, and we'll be back on schedule again.

It's been a tough pull and the end is not in sight, but we know we'll make it because we have the finest readers in the world and we can count on you to keep the subs and dollars rolling during the next critical weeks.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Every reader get a reader—a new reader a week who will in turn get other readers—an endless chain.

2. Hold a party, big or small—proceeds to FREEDOM.

3. Write us about forming a Freedom Associates club in your community. You can have an exciting program of forums, debates, socials, and actions for progress while canvassing for new readers.

You'll think of other ideas—but the big idea is PLEASE KEEP WORKING FOR FREEDOM. There are still thousands who have not renewed, and thousands more who have not been reached.

You've been wonderful and we thank you. We appreciate your indulgence and pray for your continued support!

# BOOKS



THE PASSION OF SACCO AND VANZETTI, by Howard Fast, 254 pp., \$3.00, Blue Heron Press, 47 W. 63d St., N. Y. 23.

Among living American novelists few boast so bright and sturdy a claim upon the affections of the working and oppressed peoples of this land as Howard Fast.

His books, "Conceived in Liberty," "The Last Frontier," and "Freedom Road" are landmarks in the literary history of the land. In them he has brought to life important episodes in the people's centuries-long struggle for the realization of full democracy.

Fast's success lies in his ability to put flesh and blood onto the dry bones of history. Men and women, great and small, live and breathe in his works. All the nobility and all the frailties of humanity are there, and by-gone days come alive for the contemporary reader.

Of great significance has been his choice of themes. He has set out to portray the really meaningful events of our past: the struggle of the new nation against British tyranny, or the struggle of peoples and classes within the nation against the small band of ruling aristocrats who seek to subject the vast majority of Americans to the rule of money.

## Welcome Addition

In "The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti" Fast has selected the celebrated case of the humble cobbler and poor fish peddler, framed on a murder charge in the midst of the Palmer-raid, "anti-Bolshevik" hysteria of 1920, and put to death in the electric chair of Massachusetts' Charlestown prison on August 23, 1927.

This book is a welcome addition to our literature of social protest.

The essential facts are here: the murder of a shoe factory paymaster and guard at Baintree, Mass.; the crude frame-up of the two Italian-born radicals; the seven years of torture in the death house while appeal after appeal was being denied by the courts; the intervention of the Harvard Professor of Criminal Law who is now a Supreme Court Justice, the Young Woman Poet and the Famous Columnist; the treachery of the hanging judge and the President of the University with his white-washing Commission of Inquiry; the insipid inhumanity of the ambitious governor and the silent President.

Here also are the demonstrations before the Boston court house and in New York's Union Square, the petitions that flooded the White House from all parts of the land, and the angry protests before U. S. Embassies and on the streets of Tokyo, Warsaw, Sydney, Paris, London, Buenos Aires, Caracas and—yes!—Johannesburgh.

Most important the author captures the tender humanity and the incorruptible nobility of the two obscure workers who were to become legendary heroes of the American working class. In a letter written to his 14-year-old son from the death house, Nicolo Sacco says with prophetic simplicity: "Yes, Dante, they can crucify

our bodies today as they are doing, but they cannot destroy our ideas, that will remain for the youth of the future to come."

The 18 chapters of the novel are presented as so many tableaux depicting a variety of events that occurred during the last 18 hours of life—the passion hours—of Sacco and Vanzetti. Within the form he has chosen Mr. Fast has done as skillful a job as could be imagined. The writing throughout is marked by a simple eloquence and terse, ironic commentary which is a welcome relief from much of the florid scribbling that passes for writing these flamboyant days.

The very unique form of the novel, however, imposes certain limitations which it is difficult to see how any writer could have overcome—as, indeed, Mr. Fast has not. The social and political climate of the times can be sketchily mentioned but not probed. The character and level of the organized struggle of American workers, who had such a great stake in the Sacco-Vanzetti case, is touched upon but not described.

## The Social Implication

The betrayal of the top officials of the AFL is referred to. But why did they betray? Who were these men? We never find out. A Communist appears in a brief dialogue with the Professor of Criminal Law and we learn that Communists are "all around the case"—but that's all. The role of the Communists in subsequent labor and civil liberties cases (Mooney, Scottsboro, McGee, Martinsville, the Rosenbergs) would seem to require more attention than they receive in this book. What objective social historian will not say that the part of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was not at least as vital to the struggle of Sacco and Vanzetti as that played by Heywood Brown and Edna St. Vincent Millay?

But it is difficult to see how the treatment of these questions could be handled in the mould into which Mr. Fast has expertly poured his "Passion."

A more penetrating fictional analysis of the social implications of the Sacco-Vanzetti case would require another kind of book. Mr. Fast must be judged on the kind he has written. "The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti" is a moving and challenging legend, the finest if not the only one of its kind. We are again indebted to the artistry of its author. L. E. B.



Howard Fast



## A Conversation from Life

By ALICE CHILDRESS

That's a pretty shade of nail polish, Marge. . . . Oh, don't belittle your hands, child—I think they are lovely. Yes, I know you get tired of being a house servant . . . yes, you should have every right to be as much as you can be. But, when you come to think of it, everyone who works is a servant. Why, we couldn't live without the hands and minds of millions of working people.

Now you just look at anything in this room or in this apartment and try to point out something that working people didn't have their hands in . . . well you can stutter and stammer all you please, 'cause you can't name a solitary thing, be it cheap or expensive.

Take that chair you're sittin' on . . . can't you see the story behind it? The men in the forests sawin' down the trees . . . the log rollers . . . the lumber-mill hands cuttin' up the planks . . . people mixin' up varnishes and paints . . . the artists drawin' the designs . . . all the folks drivin' trains and trucks to carry 'em . . . the loaders liftin' them off and on . . . all the clerks writin' down how many there are and where they're goin'—and I bet that's not half of the story.

Now Marge, you can take any article and trace it back like that and you'll see the power and beauty of laboring hands.

### What the Hands Do

This tablecloth began in some cotton field, tended in the burning sun, cleaned and baled, spun and bleached, dyed and woven. Find the story, Marge, behind the lettuce and tomato sandwich, your pots and pans, the linoleum on the floor, your dishes, the bottle of nail polish, your stove, the electric light, books, cigarettes, boxes, the floor we're standin' on, this brick building, the concrete sidewalks, the aeroplanes overhead, automobiles, the miles of pipe running under the ground, that mirror on the wall, your clock, the canned goods on your shelf, and the shelf itself. Why, you could just go on through all the rest of eternity singin' the praises of labor.

So you can see we are all servants and got a lot in common . . . and that's why folks need unions. Well, for example Marge, suppose all you had was money and you wanted to make some more money. . . . Oh hush, girl! I know you wouldn't, but let's suppose. . . . Well, you'd hire ten people without any



money who knew how to make tablecloths . . . and you'd sell them for four hundred dollars and pay the folks who made them one hundred of that. . . . Marge, I didn't say you would do that . . . I'm only pretendin' . . . Well, never fear honey, we would form a union and tell you we wouldn't sew any more for you until you paid us fair . . . and then you'd either do that or make nothin'!

### Who's Ordinary?

Why, not too long ago the workin' people in France folded their hands and everything stopped—the buses didn't run, the garbage wasn't collected, the stores shut up, and folks was in a fix.

Now, contrary to some opinion, I contend that healthy folks love to work, but "a servant is worthy of his hire . . . and they want decent pay and clean places to work where they won't be burnt up in no fire trap building, they want a little time to rest and enough pay to buy and enjoy some of the wonderful things they have made.

Yes, indeed, girl—I do get so tired of hearin' folks say, "I'm just an ordinary workin' man." Why workin' people are the grandest folks in the whole wide world. . . . They set the steamships on the ocean and the lighthouse on the land . . . they give us our breakfast coffee and a roof over our heads at night. . . . That's right, Marge, when workin' folks get together it should be with the highest respect for one another, because it is the work of their hands that keeps the world alive and kickin'.

Oh, Marge, what do you mean "you guess they're right nice." . . . I told you before . . . YOU HAVE BEAUTIFUL HANDS!

## Our Expert on Popular Entertainment Takes . . .

# Another Look at Negro Music

By John Henry

The vulgarity, anti-Negro content and simpering sentimentality of many current Negro-performed records should warn Negro musicians that either they re-discover the music of their people and fight to create, produce and present it, or they will die as serious artists.

In a recent article in *FREEDOM*, this writer assailed white imitators of Negro musical material and argued that they are plagiarizing and destroying this vast body of people's culture to meet the demands of commercial profit. But the Negro artists are also caught and used in the market-place approach to music.

In the period just after the Reconstruction and in the early 1900's and into the Twenties, the emerging Negro artists drew heavily on the folk materials surrounding them. Though their work was created and performed mainly for the entertainment of whites, its form and content retained much of the vitality and emotional experience of their people. Merely to mention W. C. Handy, Scott Joplin or Bessie Smith, just to mention a few, revives memorable melodies close to the Negro people.

### Negroes Also Affected

But today when the entire culture of this nation is being denuded of all semblance of democratic and human expression, and when the popular music taste makes a best seller of "Dragnet," the theme music of a TV cops and robbers show, the Negro artists have not remained unaffected.

And so we get records today, "You Ain't Nothing But a Hound Dog," by Willie Mae Thornton; "You Just Like a Ole Ginny Mule," by Big Maybelle; "Let Me Have Whiskey," by Amos Milburn; "You're No Kinda Good No How," by Varetta Dillard; or "TV Is the Thing This Year," by Dinah Washington. These songs are insulting to both Negro men and women and are filled with lyrics that imply and directly suggest immorality as the dominant activity in the Negro community.

The so-called "cry" idiom today is a vulgarization of the "blues" by white singers. But the makers of the "race" records demand that Negroes imitate the imitators of the blues. Listen to "You Did Me Wrong," by the Buccaneers; "You Could

Be My Love," by the Five Crowns, and "I Tried," by the Velvets, of the most inane lyrics and monotonous melody imaginable. The tenors are off tune, the bass and baritones croak and groan, and all have an unhappy relationship with their accompanists.

### "Jump Up and Down"

The exploitation is two-fold. The white record makers find a group of Negroes eager to sing. They are paid a pittance for a record date. The product is channelled into the Negro communities, and plugged by the Negro disk jockeys.

A young Negro musician related an incident to this writer that shows what's happening. He was drumming with a small group at a suburban night spot near New York City. The manager came up to the leader after they'd played a few numbers and said, "Tell the tenor man to jump up and down. That's what the folks like to see. And tell the drummer to make the licks a little hotter."

### Be-Bop Abstractions

What is needed today is a conscious struggle by Negro musicians to save themselves and their musical heritage. The recent history of Negro music has been one of revolt against the commercial approach to music. The exponents of Be Bop, among whom are such stars as Dizzie Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon, Bud Powell, Thelonius Monk, Miles Davis, Max Roach and Art Blakey, revolted against the limitation imposed on music by the music profiteers. But their revolt was a technical and formalist one, and instead of digging in the vast reservoir of Negro folk music for themes and techniques, they have dissipated their energies in the creation of technical abstractions.

Yet I would not label this

development as either "reactionary" or "progressive." There are elements of both trends in it. There is in the best of this music the plaintive strains of the blues, and the satiric sarcasm characteristic of Negro musicians' scorn for Tin Pan Alley creations. Can this be said to be "reactionary"? And yet where can formalist abstractions lead? Obviously not in the direction of what the great Czech composer Anton Dvorak foresaw for the future of Negro music:

"In the Negro melodies of America I discover all that is needed for a great and noble school of music. They are pathetic, tender, passionate, melancholy, solemn, religious, bold, merry, gay, gracious or what you will. It is music that suits itself to any mood or purpose."

### New Channel

The spirit of great creativity burns among Negro musicians and can be realized, if they will only heed Dvorak's observation that "all the great musicians have borrowed from the songs of the common people."

But so long as the music hucksters set the patterns and call the tunes, there will be little development of Negro or any other music in this country.

Negro musicians must find new audiences and channels for their work. This means Negro-directed enterprises such as concert tours, dance circuits, recording companies, dance groups using Negro music, pageants, mass music festivals and other forms and techniques that will develop under this approach to the Negro community.

The salvation of the Negro musician and his music rests in his and the hands of the Negro people; there is nobody else who can or will help him.

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