



Half the World

by Claudia Jones

BECAUSE THE GATHERING storm of protest against the Smith Act nullification of the Bill of Rights grows, the Truman bi-partisan administration in its desperation seeks to counter even more the peace strivings of the American people.

How to counter the peace strivings of the American people? How to put blindfolds on their eyes. The Gallup Poll shows that 74 percent of the American people want a cease-fire in Korea now, an end to the killing, negotiations between the big five powers, friendship and amity between the Soviet Union and the United States, in a peace pact.

Hit at the peace strivings of American women! Attack mothers and grandmothers, who all their adult lives have contributed—some from youth—to the fight for social progress. If they are Communist working class leaders—all the better, to help throw the scare of God into women from the nation's churches who want peace. All the better to attempt to dissuade Negro mothers, and working class mothers and women from ever more raising their thunderous fierce maternal cries of peace now against the despoilers of our youth, whom the jimcrow Army brass proudly states are now being turned into "professional killers!"

IN SAN FRANCISCO, pounding fists of FBI agents break down the door of Loretta Starvus Stack. They haul her away without allowing her children to breakfast, or for her to arrange for their care. A judge correctly told a Frisco delegation the FBI are not human—when on the job.

In New York City, a child is arrested with her father at an airport, when Phil Frankfeld, Ohio Communist leader, is hauled away with his eight-year-old daughter, whom he meets there, to a filthy jail. Her mother is arrested simultaneously in Cleveland, Jean Frankfeld, former Baltimore school teacher. Friends later have to take the frightened child away.

This brings the number of women victims of the Smith Act to 11. Included in the latest wave of attacks is Dorothy Rose Blumberg, who in recent years had devoted her time to peace activities on a New York neighborhood basis—busy as she has been raising her grandchildren.

Other victims include Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Betty Gannett, Marion Bachrach, Dorothy Ray Healey and Rose Chernin of Los Angeles, Bernadotte Doyle, Oleta O'Connor Yates and myself.

This is not just brutality in the ordinary gangster sense, but a planned policy of attack. Reaction in America knows that these women leaders have been dedicated to the fight for lasting peace and social progress, for the rights of the American working class and the oppressed Negro people, for women's equality and dignity, for youth's future, for the happiness of children. It is a counter-attack to stem the rising tide of women's unity for peace and social progress, to warn other non-Communist women leaders who want an end to the high cost of living; a peace economy not for death and destruction of their sons and husbands in a third atomic world war which would bring devastation not only to the world but to our own land.

One cannot help but compare the bestial treatment of mothers in these persecutions with what is being suffered by Korean women whose land is plundered by American imperialists. On our own skins therefore we are now beginning to feel what they have suffered en masse. Because these women working class leaders have fought for international solidarity with women and mothers of other lands, they attack us. Because our "overt act" is that of writing, thinking, acting for peace and social progress they charge us with "conspiracy." But the real conspiracy of those who persecute us is against the masses of American men, women and youth, against our dearest possessions—the right of our children and children's children to peace, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

In the fight for the freedom of the 11 Communist leaders, American women played an outstanding role. They will play it again, and on a higher level, in our freedom, because they recognize, even as they did not fully two years ago, the warning of the Communist leaders that the legal violence against them, presaged an onslaught against the rights of all Americans, the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. Demand reasonable bail for the jailed women and men victims of the Smith Act! Support the fight for a rehearing of the 11 Communist leaders. Weld even greater unity for peace—for a ceasefire now in Korea, and for negotiations between the Big Five Powers for lasting peace!

CORRECTION

I regret that in my column of Aug. 5, quotes were mistakenly placed around my own conclusions and credited instead to the editorial opinion of the Afro-American, a Negro newspaper. It was I not the Afro who observed: "The first question Ben Davis asked on reaching Lewisberg prison, where he was sent permanently to Terre Haute federal penitentiary; was, according to the N. Y. Amsterdam News, whether jimcrow existed in the Federal penitentiary. It is my opinion that the imprisonment of Ben Davis in Terre Haute and not below the Mason Dixon line represents a recognition (albeit sullied by his very jailing) by the reactionary Truman Administration of its own vulnerability on the Negro Question at home and abroad. Typical of reaction's fear of Negro-white unity, another historic contribution of the Communist Party, was their separation in imprisonment of this stalwart son and outstanding leader of the Negro people from his white co-workers."