

COMMEMORATIONS EAST AND WEST

New York

60th anniversary of the veterans' return from Spain

by Marv Gettleman

Almost 1,000 persons braved rainy weather on Sunday, April 26 to come to Borough of Manhattan Community College to join with 31 Lincoln Brigade veterans in commemorating the Brigade's return from Spain 60 years earlier. Some people came from the west coast, others from Atlanta, Chicago, Florida — even Florence

Continued on page 4

Marvin Gettleman, non-veteran Staff Associate of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, helps edit The Volunteer.



John Morrin

Left to right: In New York, Ring Lardner, Jr., Frances Chaney, Lardner's granddaughters Emma Lardner and Maude Burke.

Berkeley

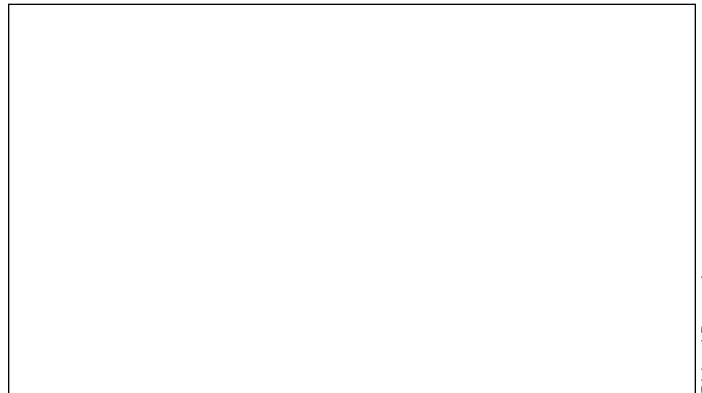
Celebrating Paul Robeson's 100th birthday

by Martha Olson

The 61st Annual West coast VALB Anniversary in Berkeley, on March first attracted 1,200 guests to commemorate Paul Robeson's 100th birthday. His famous adjuration that "the artist must take sides" was the keynote for the celebration. Milt Wolff's opening remarks to the 1,200 guests recalled that the VALB's founding con-

Continued on page 5

Martha Olson's last article for The Volunteer, on the San Francisco Bill Bailey Project, appeared in the Fall 1997 issue.



Richard Barmack

Left to right: Milt Wolff, Hon Brown and Connie Thornton at the West Coast celebration.

INSIDE Bernard Knox on premature anti-fascists ■ ALBA Board ■ Paul Preston on La Pasionaria ■ Cary Nelson on *Criminales* ■ Seattle IB memorial ■ Kailin exposes Herrick ■ Gabriel Jackson on Spanish ecology ■ Los Amigos ■ Ralph Fasanella

Welcome to Seattle

by Bill Susman

Ossie Davis, speaking at this year's New York affair on April 26, mentioned the absence of memorials in the U.S. honoring the International Brigades. He committed himself to work on this issue as soon as he finishes his present task of erecting memorials to the African-Americans who died by the thousands in the wars from the American revolution to the present.

We gratefully accept his offer. ALBA, the ALBA Associates and the Puffin Foundation have long been working on this same issue. We are ready to announce an initial breakthrough!

The very first unveiling of such a memorial to the International Brigades, consisting of a large copper plaque fastened to a granite boulder will take place this coming fall in Seattle, Washington. The site is the "Hub" on the University of Washington's main campus. The date and time are already scheduled: October 14, 1998 at 2:00 PM. In case of rain (something we always have to anticipate in Seattle), the event will go on, but under a giant tent.

This event was made possible by the local enthusiasm generated by ALBA's "Shouts from the Wall" exhibit, which appeared at the University of Washington in the fall of 1996.

Three members of our ALBA Board of Governors brought this about. They are Professor Tony Geist, who took the lead in bringing the exhibit to Seattle, and in arranging the campus memorial afterward. He was assisted by Lincoln vets Abe Osheroff and Bob Reed, residents of Seattle.

Just imagine Abe Osheroff at the age of 82, joining the University of Washington faculty to teach a course on the Spanish Civil War. Abe's superb evaluation by his students led some to proclaim that he was the best professor they had in four years of classes. Some helped over-subscribe our memorial.

Now it is the intention of Tony, Abe and Bob to make the inaugural of the monument a national event. They are inviting all readers of The Volunteer to join them on October 14 in Seattle. In addition to university participation, some Washington state high schools will be sending bus loads of students to attend. Travel to Seattle may not be as expensive as some may think. Abe Osheroff paid only \$240 round trip when he came to New York in April.

This may be a good time to visit our Great Northwest, while attending the glorious unveiling. Welcome to Seattle. ■

Bill Susman is an editor of The Volunteer.

ALBA board meets April 25

by Bill Susman

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives Board of Governors always meets on the Saturday before the annual New York Veterans "affair," so that Board members can attend both events. This spring's meeting was one of our best. You could feel that the success of our touring exhibits, *Shouts From the Wall* and *The Aura of the Cause*, is having a positive impact on our Board.

The agenda consisted not only of reviewing ALBA's past and present achievements but also in planning for the the future and designating the Board members responsible for carrying them out. Some of our new ventures require two or more years of preparation, and must be begun at once. Here is what we intend to do:

- Organize, under Fraser Ottanelli's leadership, an international scholarly conference on the Spanish Civil War to take place two years from now;
- Mount an exhibition of drawings by Spanish children done during the Civil War, now housed in the Southworth Collection at the University of California at San Diego. This project will be organized by Tony Geist;
- Produce a book or film, under Peter Carroll's direction, on the extraordinary participation of Jewish combatants in the International Brigades;
- A video made specifically for high school students on the significance of the participation of international

Continued on page 3

The Volunteer

Journal of the
Veterans of the
Abraham Lincoln Brigade
an ALBA publication

799 Broadway, Rm 227
New York, NY 10003
(212) 674-5552

Editorial Board

Marvin Gettleman • Leonard Levenson
Abe Smorodin • Bill Susman

Submission of Manuscripts

Please send manuscripts typewritten and double-spaced, if possible. If you wish your manuscripts returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Material for The Volunteer may also be sent via E-mail at: mgettlem@duke.poly.edu

Premature anti-fascists: A lecture by Bernard Knox

One of the newest developments in ALBA's steady progress in recent years, is the financial support from the Lincoln Brigade supporter who prefers anonymity, and who in 1995 funded the George Watt Memorial essay award. Last year, with matching funds from New York University, this same donor established the Bill Susman Lectureship on anti-fascism and the Spanish Civil War. The ALBA-VALB weekend began at NYU when the distinguished classicist and former member of the XIth International Brigade, Bernard Knox, delivered the first Bill Susman lecture, on the topic "Premature Antifascist."

Having volunteered for military service in support of the Spanish Republic after he had studied classics at Cambridge University in England, Knox spoke on the basis of his own experience, enriched by decades of study. This lecture has been published in pamphlet form by NYU's King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center, and a limited number of copies can be obtained from the New York VALB

Inaugurating the Bill Susman/ALBA Lectureship

office. We can only allude here to the some of the highlights of its brilliant, searching and highly personal nature.

Not only was Knox wounded in Spain, but he later served with the OSS in Nazi-occupied France during World War II. Moving to the United States, he enrolled for graduate study at Yale University where he was asked by the admitting Professor why he was selected for liaison with the French Resistance forces. Knox explained his skill in French, learned while serving with French volunteers during the Spanish Civil War. "Oh," said the Professor. "You were a premature anti-fascist."

Without letting the Professor know, Knox was taken aback by the use of this Cold War code word.

How could anyone be a premature

anti-Fascist? Could there be anything such as a premature antidote to poison? A premature antiseptic?... a premature anti-racist? If you were not premature, what sort of anti-Fascist were you supposed to be? A punctual anti-Fascist? A timely one?

Knox's subsequent experience in France at the end of World War II gave him familiarity with another, somewhat less admirable, type, the *resistants de la dernière heure*, or last minute anti-Fascists.

Severely wounded in the defense of Madrid, and sure he was dying, Knox was angered at being cut down in his youth, as were Homer's and Virgil's slain heroes. Returning to Albacete for convalescence he saw the Lincoln Brigade on its way to the front with a long banner reading **THE YANKS ARE COMING**. Whatever gratitude Bernard Knox felt at that moment to the Lincolns who were relieving his decimated unit, was surely repaid by his delivery in late April of the inaugural Bill Susman lecture. ■

ALBA Board Meets

Continued from page 2

volunteers in Spain, to be undertaken by Abe Osheroff;

- Continual study by Cary Nelson of the digitizing of our Archive as an effective way to reach out through the Internet;

- Extension to other universities of arrangements similar to that between ALBA and NYU to create programs like the Annual Bill Susman/ALBA Lectureship (the inauguration of which is described in the article above);

- Establishment of memorials to the International Brigades all over the country;

- Expanding the ALBA-VALB web site — which is www.alba-valb.org — to increase our international contacts, to be carried out by Fraser Ottanelli and Cary Nelson;

- Expanding the reach of the George Watt Memorial Essay Awards to include high school as well as college and graduate school contestants, to be carried out by the Watt Award subcommittee: Eunice Lipton, Peter Carroll, Bill

Susman, Fraser Ottanelli, and Committee Chair, Arnold Kramer;

- Lastly, and definitely not the least of this year's decisions, was to establish an ALBA endowment. Although this will make fundraising more difficult, we hope it will put our finances on a sounder basis. This is because an endowment permits us to draw only on interest or dividends, and virtually forces us at the same time to make greater efforts to raise the annual funds necessary to underwrite our many activities. Doing this will in turn enable us to carry out our tasks more effectively, especially the development of programs to reach America's young people.

We appeal to readers of *The Volunteer* to seriously consider leaving ALBA money in their wills, or donating large amounts now. This can be done in such a way that the donors receive income while they live, the principal going to ALBA only on their deaths. Furthermore, donors can take a full tax deduction now, even though they continue to draw income. If you have any questions on this or any other matter relating to ALBA's current plans, please write to Bill Susman, ALBA, room 227, 799 Broadway, New York, NY 10003. ■

N.Y. — The Vets 60th Anniversary celebration

Continued from page 1

(Italy), Madrid and Barcelona.

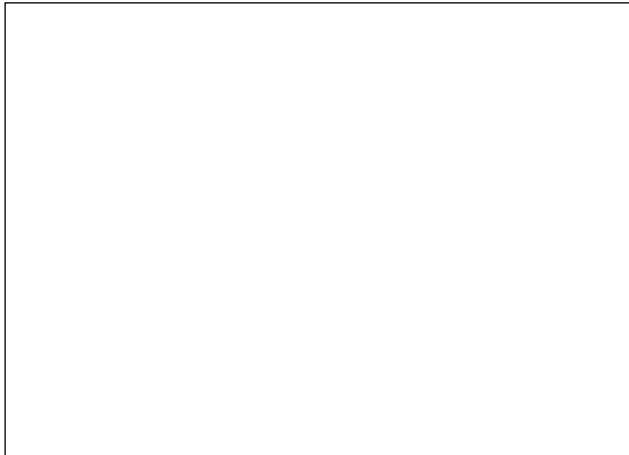
Henry Foner, disregarding a fever, served in his signature role — relaxed, witty, urbane Master of Ceremonies of the program at the College's Theater One. Meeting months and weeks ahead of time, the New York VALB office staff (Abe Smorodin, Len Levenson, Bill Van Felix, Moe Fishman, Sylvia Thompson, Jack Karan, Marv Gettleman, with Bill Susman pulling strings from Sarasota, and assisted this year by the new ALBA staffers, Diane Fraher and Esther Cassedy) planned the event, and on April 26 savored the fruits of their efforts. Sylvia Thompson and Miriam Gittelson, both widows of Lincoln veterans, received plaudits for their flawless on-site management of the event. A well-stocked literature/video/poster booth, staffed by volunteers, featured Spanish Civil War and printed posters by recently-deceased Lincoln vet Ralph Fasanella (generously donated by Ralph's widow Eve and by their son, Marc) which were selling like... well, like Fasanella posters.

An early high point was Moe Fishman's calling of the roll of Lincoln veterans present. Twenty nine came up to the stage, while three sat in

wheelchairs at the Theater's front. Moe summarized VALB's six decades of work for peace, justice and against repression. The audience greeted the vets with a standing ovation.

Coming from Madrid, Ana Perez the chairperson of the organization that arranged the Homenaje of 1996, Los Amigos de los Brigadas Internacionales, then gave a brief account of the varied and estimable recent activities of the Amigos.

Then the superb duo, Ruby Dee



Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis take a bow.

Lincoln Vets at the New York event

- | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Al Amery | Charles Hall | Celia Seborer |
| Martin Balter | John Hovan | Jack Shulman |
| Norman Berkowitz | Clarence Kailin | John Simon |
| George Cullinan | Al Koslow | Abe Smorodin |
| Milt Felsen | Len Levenson | George Sossenko |
| Harry Fisher | Joe Luftig | William Susman |
| Moe Fishman | Mat Mattson | Hy Tabb |
| Saul Friedberg | Art Munday | Sam Walters |
| Ben Goldring | Abe Osheroff | Saul Wellman |
| Lou Gordon | John Penrod | Bill Van Felix |
| | Sam Schiff | |

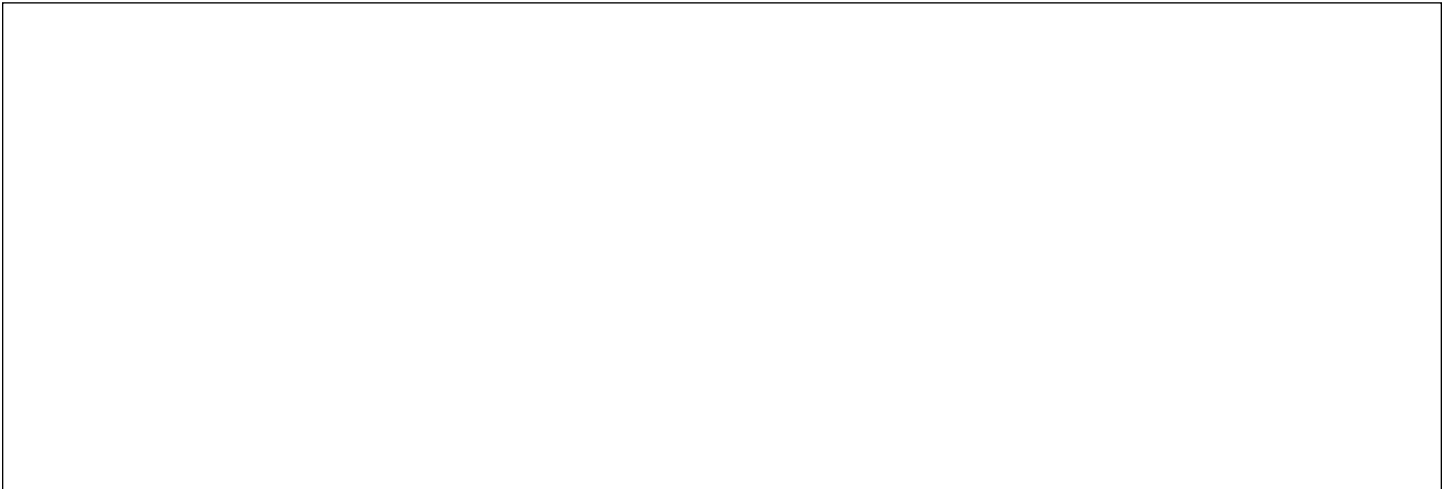
and Ossie Davis, came on stage to honor the Lincoln Brigade veterans and also to mark the 100th birthday one of the few Americans given honorary membership in the Brigade — Paul Robeson. Ruby read Milt Wolff's 1971 statement evoking the gratitude and admiration for the singer who had made a memorable wartime visit to sing for the International Brigades in Spain.

Eric Levenson

After saluting the actor John Randolph in the audience ("I'm still here" Randolph called out), Ossie took the microphone to relate a parable that had as its main point that the Lincoln Brigade should face reality and the inexorable passage of time, by reaching out to the youth who need the message that their experience conveys — to inspire them to con-

The vets received a rousing greeting when they took the stage at the New York event.

Eric Levenson

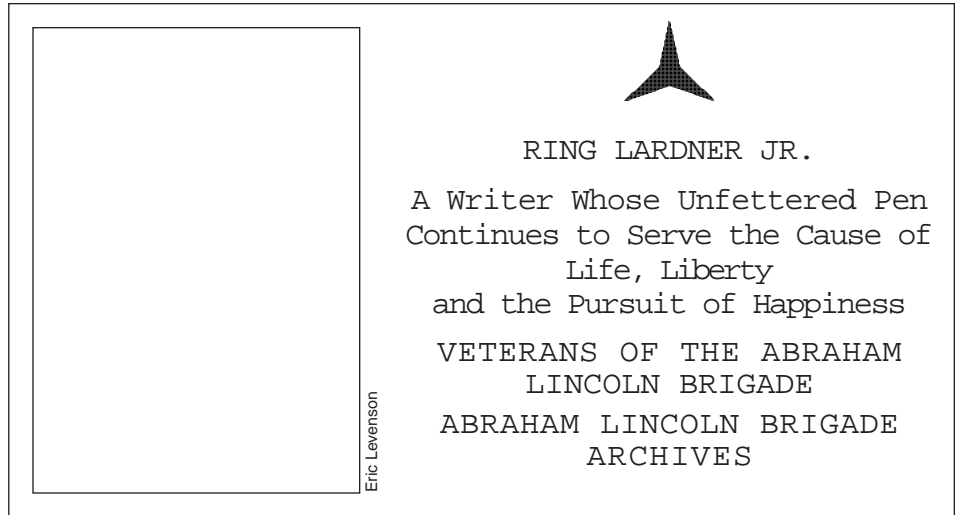


Bill's remarks showed that ALBA and VALB together have been doing precisely what Ossie Davis urged — to reach out to the young.

tinue the international struggle against racism, fascism and war that brought the Lincolns to Spain, and which the Brigade's survivors have been waging ever since.

Henry Foner then introduced "America's troubador," Pete Seeger who came on stage both with banjo and guitar, and as he has been doing for decades, led the entire audience in song. Also participating in the spirited musical portion of the program, Bernardo Palombo and Dorothy Potter, with David Soldier providing violin accompaniment to the singing and guitar, offered stirring renditions of a medley of Spanish Civil War songs. Pete made a surprise return appearance, joining Bernardo, Dorothy and David, and performing intricate riffs on banjo along with the trio.

After the music, Bill Susman



Ring Lardner, Jr., and the inscription on the plaque presented to him.

took the stage, accompanied by the writer Ring Lardner, Jr., and five Lardner family members. Before introducing the day's honored guest, Bill reviewed ALBA's recent achieve-

ments — especially the travelling poster and photo exhibits, which have had great impact. Seen all over the

Continued on page 6

Berkeley — Celebrating Robeson's 100th birthday

Continued from page 1

vention in 1940 at Chicago had awarded an honorary membership to Robeson, only one of three ever conferred by VALB, for extraordinary devotion to the cause of the Spanish Republic.

Following Milt Wolff, Veterans Hilda Roberts and David Smith read the names of the Lincolns who had died since the last reunion and a moment of silence was observed. The Veterans present were then summoned by name to the platform. They were joined by eleven members of the Amigos de Los Brigadas Internacionales (AABI) who were visiting from Spain. After a rousing reception, Ana Perez, Chair of the AABI, spoke briefly and her companions distributed mementos to the veterans.

State Senator Barbara Lee next spoke. She is the candidate of choice to replace retiring Congressman Ron Dellums, a longtime friend and associate of the Bay Area Post. She praised the persisting work by the Bay Area Post in the "Good Fight."

Peter Carroll, Chair of ALBA fol-

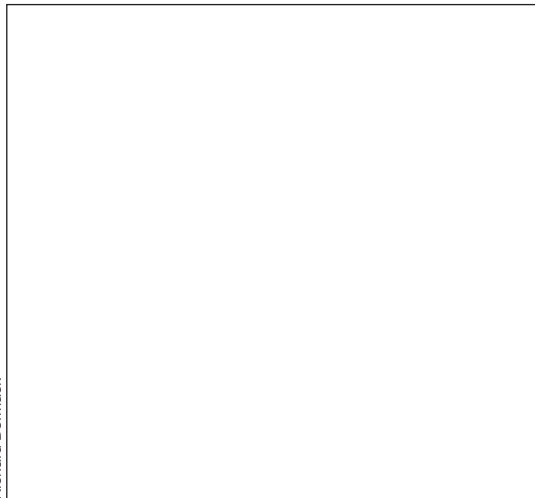
lowed. He outlined ALBA's current projects and plans for continuing acquisition of archives, in publishing and in exhibits dealing with the Spanish Civil War.

Professor and author P. Sterling Stuckey, next, with warmth and expertise talked of Paul Robeson's life and paid tribute to his accomplishments.

The collection appeal was then made by Casey Brown and Neala Thornton as their "Veteran" grand-

mothers Hon and Corinne. paid particular attention. They urged continued support of the William Sorel Pediatric Hospital in Cuba, a longterm project of the Bay Area Post that Hon Brown, Corinne Thornton, along with Hannah Olson, Victoria Paraga and other Post members have worked well and successfully over the past three decades.

The featured closing event, a dramatic tribute to Paul Robeson, *The Artist Must Take Sides*, was introduced by Martha Olson daughter of late Veteran Leonard Olson. Written by Roby Newman, son of another recently deceased Lincoln veteran, Robert Colodny, the presentation was directed by Michael Newman of the San Francisco Mime Troupe and performed by Melina Brown, L. Peter Callender and Bob Ernst. It received a prolonged standing ovation. ■



Professor P. Sterling Stuckey addressing the Berkeley event.

New York — The 60th anniversary celebration

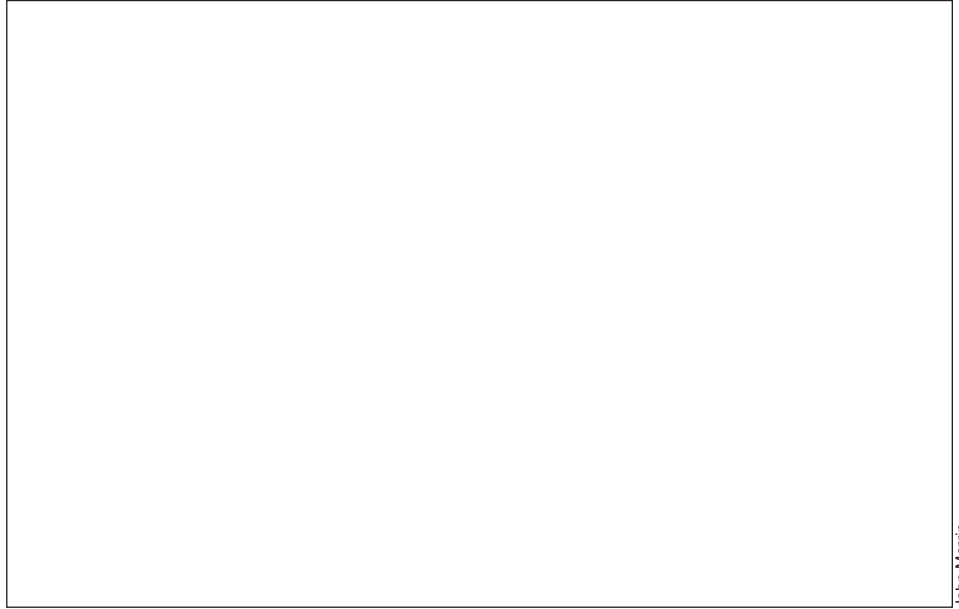
Continued from page 5

country, from the Berkshire mountains of Massachusetts, to the Museums and galleries of Florida, from the academic environs of Seattle to the beachfront of Santa Monica, these exhibits have attracted young people in the tens of thousands, often brought by their school teachers to study the visual representations of the still-relevant anti-fascist struggles waged in Spain six decades ago. Bill's remarks showed that ALBA and VALB together have been doing precisely what Ossie Davis urged — to reach out to the young. And will continue to do so.

Bill then presented an inscribed plaque to Ring, after which each of the six Lardners spoke. Space limitations prevent us from printing all these remarks, but a few highlights will have to suffice. Ring's stepdaughter, Kate, whose father David Lardner, a war correspondent for *The New Yorker*, was killed during World War II, began the family saga.

Kate told of how her mother Frances came to marry David's brother Ring, and continued with the story of how the family weathered Cold War repression (Ring's imprisonment, and that of his fellow Hollywood radicals, and their later blacklisting). Perhaps most poignant was how Ring told his children that "he might have to go to jail because some men in Washington had asked him things they had no right to ask, and he'd told them so." Hoping her father would not be taken away, Kate clung to the word "might." Ring told them that nearly a year in jail "would seem a long time," but added it won't be such a long time "over your lifetime or mine. . . . just a passing thing."

Other family members also offered moving commentary: two granddaughters expressed their love and admiration for grandpa, Frances Chaney Lardner told of a wife's struggles with her own career and her husband's during the blacklist era. Vivid and eloquent letters from another Lardner brother, Jim, who was the last Abraham Lincoln Brigade volunteer to be killed in Spain, were read aloud, a fitting conclusion to the day's events. ■



Left to right: Pete Seeger, Bernardo Palombo, Dorothy Potter and David Soldier.

John Morrin

Ling Ching Siu — A Chinese volunteer

by Len Tsou and Nancy Tsou

A New York-based Chinese language newspaper, *The Salvation Times*, on June 22, 1939, printed a letter from a group of eight Chinese International Brigaders interned in a French refugee camp at Gurs. They reported that there had been scores of Chinese who had fought for the Spanish Republic in the International Brigades. Some had returned to China after the Sino-Japanese war broke out in July 1937. Some had been killed in battle; one had been captured by the Franco army; and a few had been repatriated after being wounded.

For over 10 years the New York husband-and-wife team of Len and Nancy Tsou has been avidly and successfully researching the participation of Asian volunteers in the International Brigades. He is an engineer, she a chemist. World travellers, they have accompanied the Lincoln veterans on their 50th and 60th anniversary trips to Spain. Their E-mail address is: lythrn@aol.com

The remaining eight Chinese volunteers were interned by the French after their retreat from Spain. Their letter described the difficult living conditions in the Camp de Gurs. They expressed their strong desire for freedom to leave to join another anti-fascist battle — this time in China against the Japanese invasion. The letter was initiated by Ling Ching Siu, the unofficial leader of the Chinese internees.

Ling was born in 1904 in Sichuan. His real name was Wei Jin Xie. The 1919 May Fourth Movement in China had transformed his life. He was then a middle-school student in Shanghai and represented it in the formation of the Shanghai Student Union. When all of Shanghai was brought to a halt by strikes of students and business owners protesting the German occupation of Shangdong, Ling realized that China was seriously in trouble. Looking to the West for a solution, he quit school in October. He sailed for France where he enrolled in a work-study program.

Continued on page 14

La Pasionaria: Dolores Ibàrruri

by Paul Preston

For her admirers, especially among Communists, Dolores Ibàrruri was both the inspirational heroine of the Spanish Civil War and a universal earth-mother figure. In contrast, for her enemies among Spanish Nationalists, she was a terrifying virago whose blood-thirsty rhetoric unmanned the right-wing parliamentary deputies in the Cortes of the Popular Front.

For the Right, her crime was to have encouraged women to abandon the serene servility which was considered the proper attitude of womankind. Such attitudes revealed more about the sexual and social fears of the Spanish Right than they did about Dolores Ibàrruri. Nonetheless, the vehemence of right-wing insults is an indication of the historical importance of Dolores Ibàrruri. To this day, her role in raising the morale of the defenders of Madrid, her much-quoted words to the women of the beleaguered city, her immortal farewell speech to the International Brigades are capable of moving those who sympathized with the Republican cause.

Nevertheless, those well-known images of Pasionaria portray precisely the passionate fire-eater of both communist legend and anti-communist demonology. They are not false images but merely partial aspects which fail fully to capture the real Dolores Ibàrruri. As a human being, and as a Communist, the essential characteristics of Pasionaria were empathy with the sufferings of others, a fierce determination to correct injustice, strength, realism, flexibility, and, as the years passed, a touch of cynicism and an obsession with the unity of the Spanish Communist Party. A rather different, cool and dispassionate Pasionaria developed during the hard years of exile and the struggle against Franco.

Dolores Ibàrruri was born on December 9, 1895, in Gallarta, an

Paul Preston's most recent previous contribution to The Volunteer was "Francisco Franco — Profile of a Dictator" in the Winter 1997-98 issue.



Dolores Ibàrruri

iron-ore mining village in Vizcaya. Her first work was as a domestic servant. In 1916, aged twenty, she married a Socialist miner, Julien Ruiz. To say that her marriage was not a happy one is a colossal understatement. In moving pages of her autobiography, she wrote of the desperation that she experienced as a married woman: "a domestic slave with no rights. when my first daughter was born, I had lived, in less than a year, an experience so bitter that only the love of my little one kept me hanging on to life."

The hardship of life as a miner's wife found no compensation in tenderness from her *machisto* husband. Dolores sought diversion in reading, principally in Marxist literature. That, together with grinding poverty, turned the previously Catholic wife into a leftist. Her nickname came from the pseudonym with which, in 1918, she signed an article for *El Minero Vizcaino*. Pasionaria (passion flower) — the choice of a flower that bloomed in spring was not a reference to her character but rather to the fact that the article was published at Easter.

In 1921, she was one of the first members of the newly founded Partido Comunista de España.

Throughout the 1920s, the human costs of her own, and more particularly her husband's militancy in the Communist Party, intensified the appalling hardship of Dolores's life. With Julien often in prison, she was left with little money to bring up a family. Inability to pay for adequate medical care and nourishment for her children contributed to the deaths of four of her daughters. Her grief and outrage intensified her determination to fight injustice. Despite the burden of looking after her family, she remained politically active, addressing meetings, writing articles, organizing demonstrations, yet also quite capable of darning the socks of a comrade or cooking for them. She was an archetypal mother-figure to the miners, teaching them to read. Yet she was also an early feminist, passionately advocating the inclusion of women in the party's activities.

Dolores' oratorical and journalistic abilities brought her to the attention of the Comintern leadership. Her devotion to the Bolshevik revolution was her rarity value. She was called to Madrid at the end of September 1931 to work as a journalist for *Mundo Obrero*, a move which coincided

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

ed with the final break-down of her marriage.

Despite frequently being imprisoned as a Communist agitator, she combined party work with life as a single parent. In November 1933, Pasionaria made her first trip to the Soviet Union as a delegate to the XIII Plenum of the Comintern. She was dazzled by what she saw.

She came to national prominence in Spain after being elected to parliament in the Popular Front elections of February 1936. During the following spring, she campaigned for amnesty for prisoners and addressed mass rallies in support of striking workers. Every day, ordinary people brought their problems to the Cortes and Dolores made a point of being available to listen.

In incident after incident, Dolores took risks, in part because of the propaganda value but also because of her burning commitment to social justice. On every occasion, she demonstrated an uncanny rapport with the poor. She was also a great success as a parliamentary deputy, attacking the right with passion and directness. However, it was the military uprising of July 18, 1936 that revealed the capacity of Dolores Ibàrruri both to inspire and give voice to the popular mood. On July 19, 1936, she made a broadcast appeal to every man, woman and child of Spain, in which she coined the phrase "The fascists shall not pass! They shall not pass!"

She worked hard visiting units at the front, consolidating the morale of the troops. Her greatest impact came from the many major public speeches in which she appealed to the civilian population to support the militias, and to the rest of the world, to support the Republic. It was hardly surprising that the ordinary people of Republican Spain, whose lives had been turned upside down by the war, should find a powerful mother figure so appealing. Every day brought losses of loved ones, food shortages, bombing raids and the constant anxiety of Nationalist terror. The strength and concern emanating from Pasionaria was a beacon of certainty in a sea of insecurity. Her simplicity

and sincerity created a rapport which enabled her to become the mouthpiece for the fears and hopes of many ordinary working-class people in the Republican zone. Every day, she was inundated by letters from ordinary people and soldiers asking her to solve some problem or other.

On September 8, 1936, she was in a Republican delegation which visited France to try to mobilize French public opinion against the government decision not to sell arms to Spain. Addressing a huge crowd in the Paris Velodrome d'Hiver, she coined another powerfully ringing phrase: "the Spanish people would rather die on its feet than live on its knees".

She came to even greater prominence during the siege of Madrid. Her own courage was on display every day, boosting the morale of others. While bombs fell at the front, without

Dolores never ceased visiting the front and gained the affection and respect of the troops precisely because of her courage in doing so.

the slightest flicker of fear, she sauntered upright along the tops of the trenches, calling for courage and determination in the face of the enemy. Her frequent radio broadcasts were a major contribution to the maintenance of morale. As the African columns neared Madrid, she turned panic and fear into hope and a determination to fight. Something about her strong voice, as it filled rooms throughout the capital, restored people's faith in themselves. From her efforts to raise the morale of the women of Madrid came perhaps the most famous of her battle cries: "It is better to be the widows of heroes than the wives of cowards!" She was regularly seen digging trenches, haranguing the troops, consoling soldiers who had lost their comrades and mothers who had lost their children.

When International Brigaders arrived on November 6, 1937 to help defend Madrid, she shared the same risks as they did in her efforts to help boost their morale. In the cellars of the

Faculty of Architecture in the University City on the northern outskirts of Madrid, full of woman and children sheltering from the Nationalist bombardment, to the sound of artillery shells and machine guns, she addressed the brigaders on November 15th. Once more she emphasized the international significance of the Spanish struggle: "You fight and make sacrifices for the freedom and independence of Spain. But Spain is sacrificing herself for the whole world. To fight for Spain is to fight for freedom and peace in the whole world."

By November 23rd, Franco had to accept that the frontal assault on Madrid had been beaten back. He moved to a strategy of trying to encircle the capital. Dolores would never again be as directly involved in the war effort but her role in maintaining morale remained crucial.

Dolores never ceased visiting the front and gained the affection and respect of the troops precisely because of her courage in doing so. Given her proven loyalty to Moscow, the delegates of the Comintern were inclined to raise her up as the principal figurehead of the party. Her admiration for the Bolshevik experience was total and her loyalty to the Soviet Union unquestioning. She was carrying out many of the functions of the secretary general, the profoundly ill Jose Diaz, working day and night. Yet she still managed to lead the campaign in favor of continued resistance.

During the Munich crisis, Prime Minister Juan Negrín proposed the withdrawal of the International Brigades in the hope that it might tip British and French sentiment in favor of the Republic. The official farewell parade was held in Barcelona on October 29th. In the presence of many thousands of tearful, but cheering, Spaniards, Dolores Ibàrruri wept as she gave an emotional and moving speech:

"Comrades of the International Brigades! Political reasons, reasons of state, the good of that same cause for which you offered your blood with limitless generosity, send some of you back to your countries and some to forced exile. You can go with pride. You are history. You are

legend. You are the heroic example of the solidarity and the universality of democracy. ...

"We will not forget you; and when the olive tree of peace puts forth its leaves, entwined with the laurels of the Spanish Republic's victory, come back! Come back to us and here those of you who have no homeland will find a homeland, those who are forced to live without friends will find friends, and all of you will find the affection and the gratitude of the entire Spanish people who today and tomorrow shout with enthusiasm: Long live the heroes of the International Brigades!"

It was in many respects her finest moment, her words had captured the emotions of the defeated.

At the end of the war, Dolores escaped to Algiers and from there to France and on to the Soviet Union. The escape from Spain and the journey to Russia was traumatic in the extreme. Exiled in Moscow and totally dependent on Russian charity, the PCE leadership could hardly be anything but the most hard-line orthodox Stalinists. Gratitude for haven in the Soviet Union and for Soviet help during the Civil War obliged Pasionaria and the other Spanish party leaders to support the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 23, 1939. In exile, she became unwillingly involved in a battle for the succession to Jose Diaz. Her eventual victory was the fruit of her skill in tacking to the prevailing winds of the Kremlin, no simple task in wartime Moscow.

Pasionaria was never a theorist, producing no contribution to Marxism. She was an enthusiastic admirer of Stalin. As PCE secretary general, her conference reports were invariably triumphalist. Speech after speech to the Party leadership declared that the fall of Franco was imminent.

At the PCE's Fifth Congress in 1954, Dolores attacked Anarchist, Socialist and Republican figures while appealing to their rank-and-file followers to abandon them and join the Communist Party. She blamed the leaders of other parties for the defeat of 1939 and accused them of being agents of American imperial-

ism. Pasionaria consistently used the language of the Stalinist purges to denounce those who had fallen from grace inside and outside the Party. However, by 1954, Pasionaria seemed to be locked in a Civil War time-warp and it was her younger colleague Santiago Carrillo who was more sensitive to Moscow's moods.

In the power struggle launched by Carrillo in the mid-1950s, the role of Dolores Ibarruri was extremely revealing. Attempts to liberalize the Spanish Party by Carrillo, Fernando Claudin and Jorge Semper ran into the opposition of the leadership group headed by the civil war veterans, Pasionaria, Vicente Uribe and Antonio Mije.

The ending of her long exile was marked by the death of Franco which she greeted with a broadcast that recaptured some of her old fire, her deep love for Spain and her capacity to give voice to the hopes of millions.

Carrillo shared with Pasionaria an acute sense of the drift of Kremlin policy. Although in conflict with the PCE leadership, Carrillo's objective of opening up the Party to new militants and seeking alliances with forces to the right, meshed well with the new Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence. Dolores had a detailed plan to isolate the impudent upstart Carrillo, but during the XX Congress of the CPSU, Khrushchev's revelations led her to think again. Shortly after, she forged an alliance with her young rival against Uribe and at a plenary meeting of the central committee, Carrillo's policy of National Reconciliation was adopted.

The practical application of this policy was the "Peaceful General Strike." Dolores, along with other leaders, opposed it. Nevertheless, it went ahead in 1958 and was a disastrous failure, Carrillo having believed the party's own propaganda about its

popular strength. Nevertheless, at a meeting of the PCE leadership held in Uspenskoie near Moscow in July 1959, Carrillo imposed a triumphalist version of the strike.

Curiously, it was during these sessions that Dolores presented her resignation as PCE secretary general. It was an impressive demonstration of her sense of realism and the fact that she put the Party above her own interests. Faced with the harsh fact of the strength which Carrillo had accumulated during his many years as organization secretary, Pasionaria had no wish to destroy the Party with a fratricidal struggle. In December 1959 at the VI Congress held in Prague, Carrillo was promoted to secretary general and she was booted upstairs to the presidency. She was happy to withdraw into private life, looking after her grandchildren, Ruben, Fyodor and Dolores, on whom she lavished the love that she had been unable to give her own children.

In her later years, Pasionaria's obsessions were loyalty to the Party apparatus and Party unity. That was starkly revealed during the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Despite her instinctive sympathies for the Russians, on August 28 1968, Pasionaria went to the Kremlin to present the Spanish condemnation of the Soviet action. It took great courage, bearing in mind that she still lived in Moscow and considering the PCE's position of dependence on the Russians.

Even greater resolve was shown by Pasionaria when the Russians sponsored a pro-Soviet, break-away Communist Party under the Civil War General Enrique Lister. When Carrillo began the fight against these Stalinist elements, he was ably backed by Dolores. Despite having no desire to fight her old friends and comrades, she knew that the long-term survival of the PCE inside Spain required that it be distanced from Moscow.

The ending of her long exile was marked by the death of Franco which she greeted with a broadcast that recaptured some of her old fire, her deep love for Spain and her capacity to give voice to the hopes of millions: "Franco is dead but Spain, the eter-

Throughout her life, her stature had grown commensurately with the scale of the problems with which she had to deal. She consistently met challenges with courage and was not diminished by defeat.

nal Spain, the Spain of democracy and freedom, the Spain which gave life to a new world, lives on in her wonderful people, capable of any achievement."

On May 13, 1977, after nearly four decades in exile, Pasionaria returned to Spain to play a significant role in the transition. To the chagrin of local activists, Carrillo imposed her nomination as a candidate for Asturias in the June elections. She campaigned energetically and successfully. For a brief period, she was made Presidente de las Cortes, an astonishing symbol of national reconciliation.

In 1977, Carrillo was attacked by the Soviet journal *New Times* and by Anatoly Krasikov in *Pravda* in response to the publication of his book *Eurocommunism and the State*. Despite her enormous reservations with regard to Eurocommunism, the same sense of realism, of horror at the possible division of the Party and of loyalty, Dolores kept her doubts to herself and supported Carrillo against

the Soviet criticisms. Beyond the fiery public orator, there was a politician who, far from being carried away by passion, was cool and calculating and had both short-term tactical skills and long-term strategic vision. Both the public and private Dolores shared remarkable personal courage and an iron loyalty to the Communist Party.

In August 1977, she felt the beginnings of heart problems and had a pace-maker fitted. She lived for another twelve years, to witness the consolidation of democracy and the virtual collapse of the Spanish Communist Party. After a battle with pneumonia, she died on 12 November 1989, aged 93. Her body lay for three days at party headquarters and over 70,000 people came to pay their respects. Her funeral on 16 November in Madrid saw her coffin, draped in the party's red flag, drawn through crowds of many thousands of people. After many tributes, a recording of her last speech was played and the

crowd sang La Internacional.

The woman, who had come to maturity just as the Bolshevik revolution was taking place, died just as holes were being knocked in the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union itself was collapsing. Yet neither that nor the fact that Franco's victory in 1939 had obliged her to spend nearly forty years in wretchedly nostalgic exile, meant that she had been a failure.

During the Spanish Civil War, she had progressed from being the mother of her party to a maternal symbol for large swathes of the population in the Republican zone. Throughout her life, her stature had grown commensurately with the scale of the problems with which she had to deal. She consistently met challenges with courage and was not diminished by defeat. In exile, just as they had done during the Civil War, her speeches and broadcasts helped to keep alive the spirit of resistance to the dictatorship and of the struggle for democracy in Spain. ■



News From Abroad



WARSAW — The Dombrowski vets are very interested in receiving the Volunteer and esteem highly the activity of VALB and ALBA reflected in the bulletin. 'ven more, the Volunteer published letters and articles about the problems and situation of the interbrigadistas of different countries and therefore can be recognized as publication of international value.

The Dombrowski vets in Poland are small in number, less than 50, and all are invalids. To continue work in history in the memorialization of our fight in Spain and World War II, we are trying to organize an association of the friends of the Dombrowski vets. The task is difficult. The present overnment of Poland is reactionary, clerical and intolerant. The certain groups of the federation of rightists parties are also antisemitic and anti-democratic. They consider the Spanish government as "red" and "communist" and the Dombrowski vets as anti-catholic and anti-patriotic.

However, the opposition made up of the Left parties is strong and they are less opportunistic and "pragmatic" than before. We wish you great results in your activities.

The Association of Polish IB Veterans

VALENCIA, SPAIN (via Internet) — Recently, a friend of mine asked me to send you this letter.

I am Fausto Villar Esteban, 80 years old and a Spanish veteran of the Lincoln Brigade. I want to remind you that on April 2, 1998, at ten o'clock in the early morning, it will be 60 years since Robert Merriman's death. It happened close to me, two meters or so, near my chief in rank, James Cody, who died while we tried to reach Gandesa (not on the Corbera Road as many have reported), during the Aragon withdrawal. continually fighting very much at a disadvantage, against the armies of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini, who surrounded us on that unfortunate day.

I think that Merriman's heroic choice to stay with his soldiers of the Lincoln Battalion instead of his Staff, was a wonderful gesture. He preferred to be killed with his comrades, if necessary, and unfortunately it happened.

Merriman, dying with his men, deserves to be remembered in these days - in the press, on the Internet or wherever.

My address is Fausto Villar Esteban, Avda del Cid, 54,2 : 4A, 46018 Valencia, Spain; phone 96-3795906.

You may write to me via E-mail. The address is: curri@mercamicro.es

Jesus Gonzalez de Miguel

The long reach of Abe Osheroff

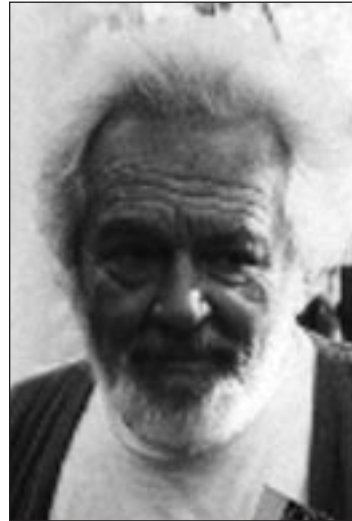
On February 18, during the "Iraq crisis," CNN televised a town meeting on the campus of Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. As Claudio Fogu's letter to Lincoln vet Abe Osheroff attests, the event attracted intense and wide national media interest. It played an important role in halting President Clinton's lurch toward U.S. military action.

Dear Abe (Osheroff): It's been quite some time since your visit at OSU last spring, but your impact has produced fruits beyond our expectations. I am sure you have followed the recent show of civil and political dissent by a sizable minority of activists, students and faculty at the recent town meeting in Columbus. The media have credited us with having an unparalleled role in stopping the course of the "Lone Ranger" foreign policy pursued by the [Clinton] administration in the recent Iraq crisis. What they have not adequately (un)covered is the deep and real continuity between our defiance of patronizing moralism and the example you and your companions in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade set for all future dissent movements in this country. Though the historical situation we confronted could not have been more

different, the spirit animating our dissenting voice was the same one which animated your antifascist struggle, and I would like you and your companions to know that your visit to Columbus last year played a major role in nourishing this spiritual continuity.

If you had a chance to watch the CNN coverage of the town meeting, you must have recognized that your visit had a profound impact on both individuals and the OSU student-faculty community-at-large. But I never expected to find myself surrounded by so many of those faces in a very spontaneous and deeply felt show of ethical-political dissent twelve months later. In the aftermath of the town meeting, both the *Nation* and the *Chicago Tribune* have published articles stressing the role that some of my students and myself had in organizing an effective strategy of protest and struck a resonant chord in American collective consciousness.

Many reporters and American opinion at large, have attempted to link our action to the 1960s student



Abe Osheroff

activism (Kent State) and free speech movement (Berkeley). Nobody has recognized the face of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade veteran that stood in the background of our political imagery. You know very well what impact our friendship and student-mentor relationship has had on my life and political commitment. What I would like you and your companions to know is the inestimable value that your example and testimony has had and can still have on all generations of Americans. If anybody had a real, visible, and documentable impact on a sizable portion of the Columbus activists, it was not Mario Savio but Abe Osheroff!

Please Abe, publish this letter in *The Volunteer* to honor their example and invite them never to abandon "The Good Fight."

With love and everlasting gratitude,

Claudio Fogu

Assistant Professor of Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

See you on the Web

In addition to the website jointly created by ALBA and VALB (www.alba-valb.org) and the active "chat-box" maintained by Andrew Lee (alba@lists.nyu.edu)*

FLASH — The Lycos Organization, a major web search outfit, just ranked the ALBA-VALB web site in the top 5 percent of those surveyed.



*To join, send your E-mail address to alba@lists.nyu.edu with a message that includes the following: The words "subscribe" and "ALBA," along with your name with a surname and at least a given-name initial.

Shouts at Mount Holyoke

by Daniel Czitrom

The ALBA poster exhibit, *Shouts from the Wall*, was enthusiastically welcomed by more than 300 people at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum in Hadley, Massachusetts on February 19. Joining the Holyoke students and faculty was an audience from the nearby Five Colleges (Amherst, Smith, Hampshire and the University of Massachusetts) and a sizeable number of folks from off campus. The presence of three Lincoln Brigade veterans – Moe Fishman, Abe Osheroff and Abe Smorodin – made for a very special evening.

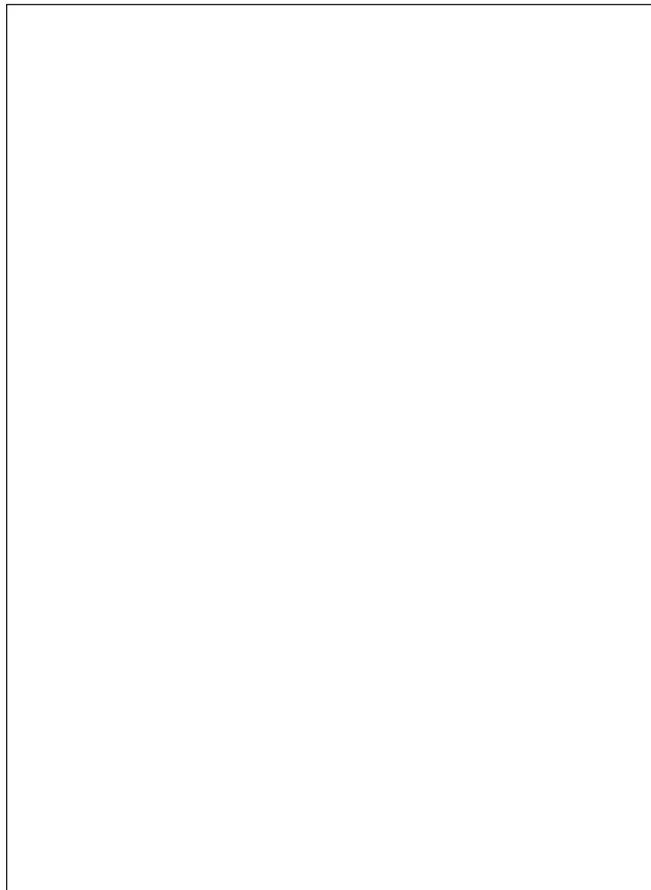
Following a brief lecture by current ALBA Chair Peter Carroll on “The Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Legend and Legacy,” the veterans spoke informally about their personal decisions to go to Spain, experiences there, and life after the war.

A very lively question and answer session allowed the audience to engage the veterans on everything – from what they had told their mothers in 1937 to their emotional responses at the 1996 Homenaje in Spain. Several students asked the veterans to articulate connections between the political struggles of the 1930s and those of today. Fishman, Osheroff and Smorodin all offered thoughtful and provocative replies. A wine-and-cheese session after the event allowed conversations and arguments to extend into the night.

Founded in 1837, Mount Holyoke College is the oldest women’s college

Professor Daniel Czitrom is Chair of History at Mount Holyoke College. He is former Chair of the ALBA Board of Directors, and co-author, most recently, of *Out of Many: A History of the American People* (2nd ed., 1997).

in the United States. The *Shouts* exhibit ran from January 27 through March 13, drawing hundreds of visitors. Marianne Doezema, Director of the MHC Art Museum, and Wendy Watson, Curator, were enormously pleased with the number of people attracted and the depth of the individual reactions to the show. Scores took the time to record their impressions – nearly all very positive



THE IRON COLUMN — Peasant! The revolution gave you the land. J. Bauset.

and emotional – in the Museum’s Visitors Book. Doezema and Watson both noted that it was rare for an art exhibit to generate this sort of response.

The show also produced a good deal of attention from the local mass media. *The Daily Hampshire Gazette* in Northampton ran a feature piece. The Springfield *Union-News* art critic Gloria Russell reviewed *Shouts*, writing: “This may be as exciting an exhibit as we are likely to see for a

long time. The large scale and direct nature of the posters capture our attention and imagination ... These compelling posters have the power to stir us, persuade us, quicken and enthral us.” In addition WCFR, the local NPR outlet, interviewed Peter Carroll about the show, and a local Amherst cable television station broadcast the February 19th opening.

The Art Museum organized several other well-attended events around *Shouts*. Diane Miliotes, assistant curator of the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College, gave a public lecture, “Antifascist Aesthetics in the 1930s: Posters of the Spanish Civil War,” which illuminated the art historical context of the posters. A showing of the documentary, *The Good Fight*, attracted a large number of students, many of whom have only a vague knowledge of the era’s events and politics.

Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives/Brandeis University Library

Finally, I gave a gallery talk on “The Spanish Civil War in American Politics and Culture,” which attracted an amazingly diverse group of people, ranging from high school and college students to activist octogenarians. The discussion afterward centered on several issues that I might not have predicted: the fight against Franco as part of the armed resistance to the Holocaust; the disproportionate number of Jews among the Lincolns; the range of

American political and cultural activity supporting the Republic during the 1930s; the continuing attraction of the anarchist movement (and myth) for some activists today.

All in all, *Shouts from the Wall* at Mount Holyoke provoked once again the enduring hold of the Spanish Civil War on the mind and imagination. The war, the art it produced and the experiences of the American volunteers who helped fight it, remain compelling routes into engaging the critical issues of our past. ■

SHOUTS FROM THE WALL

1998

MICHIGAN

June 15 — July 31

Wayne State University
Department of Art & History
Elaine J. Jacob Gallery
150 Community Arts Building
Detroit, MI 48202

PENNSYLVANIA

Aug. 20 — Oct. 10

Arthur Ross Gallery

University of Pennsylvania
Fisher Fine Arts Library. Rm. 209,

During Wing
220 South 34 St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6303

Nov. 1 — Dec. 15

Center Gallery Bucknell University
Lewisburg, PA 17837

1999

DELAWARE

Jan. 15 — March 7

University Gallery, University
of Delaware

114 Old College

Newark, DE 19716
PENNSYLVANIA

April 7 — June 6

Zoellner Art Center

Lehigh University

420 East Packer Ave.

THE AURA OF THE CAUSE

(the photography exhibit)

1998

WASHINGTON, DC

2112 "R" St., NW
Washington DC 20008

July 24 — Sept. 5

Fonda Del Sol Visual Art
Center

ILLINOIS

Sept. 18 — Nov. 1

BRING THESE EXHIBITS TO YOUR LOCALITY

Contact Diane Fraher, ALBA Staff Associate

at 212-598-0968

Ling Ching Siu — A Chinese volunteer

Continued from page 6

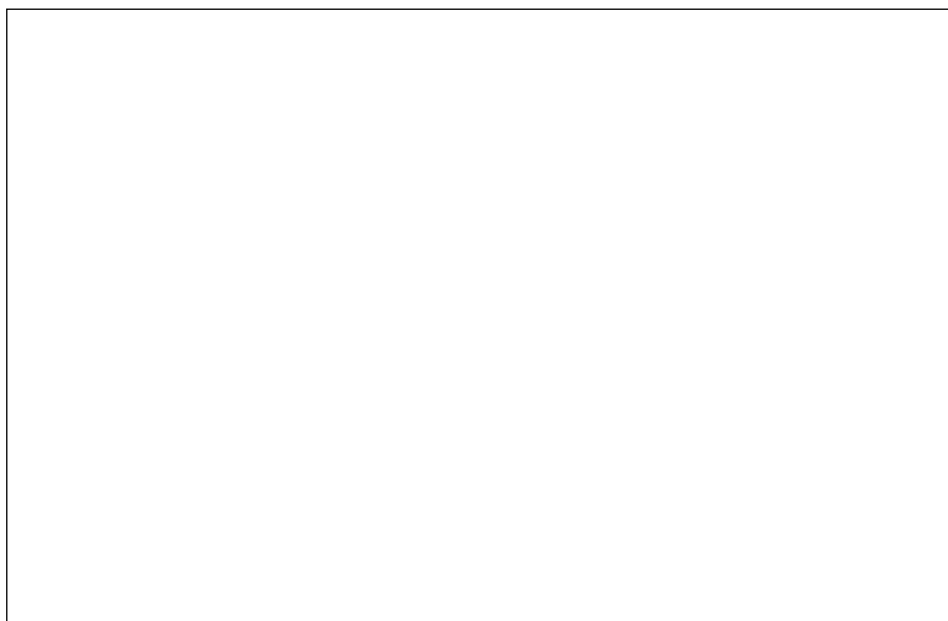
Ling moved to England to study in 1920. After finishing secondary school, he moved to Germany in 1923 to study mathematics and political science at Goettingen University. There he met China's future leaders, Chu Teh and Chou En-Lai. Two years later, he moved to Berlin and, in 1926, joined the Chinese Communist Party. Focusing his activity in international movements, Ling participated in the formation of the League Against Imperialism in 1926 and its Brussels founding congress in 1927.

At a 1927 Berlin Sport Stadium rally of 20,000 people in support of the Chinese anti-imperialists, Ling presented Ernst Thaelmann with a solidarity banner given by the Chinese Trade Union. Starting in 1930, he regularly contributed articles to *International Press Correspondence* (Inprecor), a Comintern journal. They dealt with the Chinese revolutionary movement and the Sino-Japanese war.

In 1933, when the Nazis seized power in Germany, Ling fled to Switzerland. In Geneva he worked closely with the German emigrés. In April of 1937, he went to Spain. At least five Chinese were already in the International Brigades. Among them, from the Renault auto plant in France, were Tchang Jaui Sau and Liou Kin Tien. They both had fought in the February battle of Jarama.

Ling's decision to go to Spain after the July fascist rebellion had not been easy. He was divorced and his teenaged son was under his care. Going to Spain meant leaving the young man in Switzerland under the care of others. Nevertheless, Ling made up his mind and left for Spain.

Ling's first application, in April 1937, to join the International Brigades was rejected by the Spanish Communist Party. Ling appealed this decision. He emphasized the reasons that he came to Spain. He wanted to participate in the Spanish people's war against fascism where his military and political knowledge could make valuable contributions.



Outside the "Chinese cabin" at Camp de Gurs in 1939. The banner from China is in the background. Ling Ching Siu is the third from the right in the back row.

Moreover, the practical experience he would obtain in Spain's anti-fascist war could be applied later in China to serve the Anti-Japanese People's Front. Ling declared, "I did not come to Spain for a brief stay. Rather, I will do whatever I can, fighting at the front as a soldier."

Ling's wish was finally granted in June. He was assigned to the anti-tank battery of the 11th Brigade. Commissioned a sergeant, Ling served as the unit's political commissar. His first battle was at Brunete in July 1937. The following month, the battery fought in the battle of Quinto where, on August 24, he received a serious wound in his right knee. He was evacuated to Benecasim hospital. There he met Dong Hong Yick from New York's Chinatown.

The seriousness of Ling's wound required his transfer to Murcia for surgery. There, Ling stayed in the Pasionaria Hospital where, to his surprise, he encountered eight other Chinese volunteers, including Chi Chang from Minnesota. He had not expected that there would be so many Chinese volunteers in Spain. Ling conceived of forming a detachment of these Chinese volunteers. He wrote Dong Hong Yick, who had remained in Benecasim, of this idea. Despite

receiving a warm approval, the proposal never came to fruition.

During his stay at the Pasionaria Hospital, Ling received a rare package, delivered by a Chinese seaman. It came from Yen-an, traveling across thousands of miles of oceans and mountains to finally reach his hand. There was a huge bright red banner inside. He was astonished to read that it was a gift from three foremost Chinese Communist leaders whose names, Chu Teh, Chou En-Lai and Peng Teh-Hwei were emblazoned in Chinese across the top. Below, in English, was the heartening message, "Unite the Peoples of Spain and China! Down with the Common Foe of Mankind — the Fascists!"

Throughout his stay in Spain, Ling steadily received Chinese newspapers updating him on the Japanese aggression in China. He was very worried about the deteriorating situation there. However, he could do nothing except draw the world's attention by writing articles about the Sino-Japanese war for Spanish and overseas Chinese newspapers. At the same time, Ling was concerned that he couldn't fulfill his parental responsibility to care of his son. For more than half a year he was confined, recuperat-

Continued on page 16

Political renewal and ecological disaster

by Gabriel Jackson

Two very significant events occurred in the last week of April: the victory of José Borrell Fontelles in the Socialist Party primaries (the first such elections in Spanish history); and the collapse of a mining company dam, resulting in the massive pollution of the southern Andalusian coast and the national park of Doñana. The two events illustrate the best and the worst of contemporary Spain.

To speak first of the good news. All of you will recall that the Socialist Party government was slowly but steadily discredited by a series of financial and political scandals from about 1991 until its electoral defeat in May 1996. The Prime Minister and Party Chairman, Felipe Gonzalez, involuntarily aided the process by refusing to acknowledge political responsibility for various cases of financial corruption and police abuses. And the Party involuntarily aided the process by refusing to consider the normal European parliamentary procedure of having the tarnished Prime Minister resign in favor of some other majority party leader not implicated in the scandals.

In effect the Socialist Party defeated itself in 1996. Gonzalez then resigned as party chair, and the principal Socialist chiefs chose as their new leader Joaquin Almunia, a very decent and intelligent man, who enjoys the full respect of his party colleagues but who lacks the personality to exercise vigorous parliamentary opposition to the increasingly rightist government of the Popular Party. However, as part of the internal cleansing of the party, Almunia accepted the demand of much of the

party membership for primary elections as the means to choose the Socialist candidate for Prime Minister in the next national elections, due to occur in the year 2000. To the surprise of all parties and all the media, the primaries, held on April 24, resulted in the victory of the "outsider" José Dorrell over Almunia, who had received the explicit blessing of all the principal party leaders.

What does this revolt of the ordinary party membership mean? Borrell is an aeronautical engineer and economist who served in the Gonzales government in two ministries, finance and public works. In the first capacity he openly advocated the revolutionary idea that Spanish professional and business people should declare their full incomes and pay income taxes thereon. Over the past ten years he has earned a deserved reputation as the politician most able, in or out of government, to explain what different tax policies and administrative decisions actually mean to the voters' pocketbooks.

As Minister of Public Works he was responsible for a large increase in non-toll automobile highways, for improvements in the infrastructure of roads, railways, airports and water supplies. he has been a vocal protector of the public interest in the debates over water distribution rights, and the potential (astronomical) costs of the high speed railways to be constructed in the coming decades. Principally then, his victory indicated the clear preference of the party membership for a candidate who understands economics, speaks frankly, and who stands for social justice in a country where traditional privileges and inertias still leave the overwhelming tax burdens on the backs of the salaried working class and white collar employees.

Important, also is the fact that he is a Catalan. Despite the immense economic and cultural importance of Catalonia, Spain has had only one Catalan Prime Minister since the

founding of the "constitutional" monarchy in 1812. And the autonomous government of the conservative leader Jordi Pujol has, since 1980, specialized in victimist complaints about how badly legitimate Catalan interests are misunderstood in the rest of Spain. Sorrel is proudly Catalan in his private life, and he was voted for in the primaries by 80 percent of the Catalan socialists whose own leaders have been afraid to oppose Pujol's victimist tactic for fear of not seeming sufficiently catalanist. If the Socialists win the election of 2000, Spain will have a Catalan Prime Minister of whom the majority of Catalans will be proud, and who will bring Catalan administrative and economic abilities to the democratic governance of all of Spain.

Now to the bad news. The Doñana national park on the coast of southern Andalusia, is one of the most important wildlife preserves in Europe, sufficiently protected by both the Spanish government and the European Union, and crucial to the life of birds migrating between Africa and northern Europe. About fifteen miles north of the park are metal mines operated by the Swedish-Canadian enterprise Boliden Aprisa. On April 25 a dam whose function was to retain the chemical and crude oil wastes of this mining area, gave way. Within a few days the toxic mud and waters had polluted some 8,900 acres of agricultural land.

The national and autonomous Andalusian governments competed, with statements claiming that Doñana had been "saved" and simultaneously blaming each other for the obvious negligence over the years which had made this a predictable catastrophe. Meanwhile hundreds of tons of fish, and unknown numbers of birds (and their eggs), none of whom had studied the exact boundaries of Doñana, have died from lack of oxygen and assorted chemical poisons. On several occasions during the past decade, park employees and ecologists had warned all levels of local and national government that toxic chemicals were seeping into the entire river and wetland system between the mining area and the

Gabriel Jackson, noted historian and journalist is an ALBA board member. His last contribution to The Volunteer was an essay in the Winter 1997-98 issue on myths and rhetoric in Spanish politics.

Continued on page 16

Political renewal and ecological disaster

Continued from page 15

Mediterranean coast. A few years ago, Boliden added some 17 yards to the height of their dam, and construction workers reported that the material used was of poorer quality than the existing walls. All these reports of seepage and of inadequate dam construction, were archivado, i.e., pigeon-holed along with official statements, to the effect that no serious deficiencies had been confirmed. The last favorable official "inspection" of the dam occurred a few hours before the

catastrophe.

It will be years before the pollution of the aquifer and the soils, including all those which the authorities claim to have "saved," can be completely cleaned up. The catastrophe illustrates a historic problem which has hardly begun to be solved in forty years of economic modernization and twenty years of constitutional democracy. Spanish administration from the days of the conquest of America has been honeycombed with overlapping jurisdictions, loosely worded laws which invite evasion,

definitions which elude clear responsibility, bureaucracies full of polite and well-dressed officials whose function is to show Potemkin villages to investors and tourists alike. What happened last month was a throw-back to the pre-democratic, under-developed and over-rhetorical Spain of the approximate era 1500-1960. Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, also "Juan de Mairena," the gentle philosophical persona created by the great poet Antonio Machado, would have been saddened, but not surprised. ■

Ling Ching Siu — A Chinese volunteer

Continued from page 14

ing from his wound, in the Pasionaria Hospital. He became very restless, and planned a return to China.

Leaving Spain proved to be just as difficult as arriving. Ling had a long wait. Relegated by his wound to rear-guard service, he was assigned as a sergeant to a supply company of the 11th Brigade. The pain from his wounded leg frequently flared up. He was in and out of hospitals for treatment.

In September of 1938, the Spanish government decided to withdraw the International volunteers. Ling, in early 1939, was evacuated to France in one of the last contingents of the International Brigade. After confinement in Argeles for three months, he was moved to Gurs in May 1939.

At Camp de Gurs, Ling, with five other Chinese, lived in a wooden cabin. At its entrance they proudly displayed a huge map of China, the bright red banner from the Chinese Communist leaders and a collage of news.

The Chinese group smuggled a printing machine, paper and ink, into the camp, and clandestinely published the latest news of the Sino-Japanese war. Ling was the self-appointed editor-in-chief and headed the publishing committee. Its members were not limited to the Chinese. They were, in fact, mainly of other nationalities. As July 7 approached, the staff produced a special issue of *Noticias de China*, commemorating the second anniversary

of the Sino-Japanese war.

The Sino-Japanese war was one of the hottest topics in the camp. The Chinese cabin was a favorite meeting place of the International Brigaders. Gathered in front of the cabin, they avidly read the latest news and debated the issues. From time to time, Ling and other Chinese volunteers were invited to Polish and Yugoslav cabins, to present reports on the Sino-Japanese war and modern Chinese history. The Chinese volunteers were well-liked and respected by the other Internationals in the camp.

During the months of the persistent, repressive incarceration, the Chinese internees appealed for aid from the expatriate Chinese communities in Europe and the USA. In October 1939, the Chinese volunteers finally received travel documents from the embassy of China in France and they then left the camp.

Ling was eager to reunite with his son. He was also planning a marriage. His new wife was named Anna Kapelle, an Austrian-trained young Rumanian. She deeply sympathized with the Chinese revolution. Together with his son, they sailed for China. After a brief stopover in Singapore they arrived in China in April 1940 to join the anti-fascist fight against Japan.

Although some of the returned Chinese volunteers went to Yanan, Ling remained in a Kuomintang-controlled area — Chongqing in Sichuan. There, in the office of the Eighth

Route Army, his background made him valuable for dealing with international representatives. Ling also used his wife's clinic as a meeting place for foreign visitors.

In 1946, Ling participated in the peace talks with the Kuomintang. He later joined the Liberation Army against the Kuomintang, serving until the final victory in 1949.

Ling was appointed Deputy Director of the Engineering Division in the Air Force of the People's Republic of China. However, 14 years after the establishment of the new Chinese government, he was "disgraced" during a time of political turmoil, and exiled to Sichuan. His wife had to leave China. She joined their son in Moscow. Ling never saw them again.

The lonely Ling quietly lived out his years with an adopted daughter in Sichuan. He immersed himself in the study of economics and politics, but his mind always clung to the time when he had been a volunteer in the Spanish Civil War. He told his daughter numerous stories about the International Brigades — they were the fires that illuminated the darkness of his life.

Ling Ching Siu endured the political storm of the Cultural Revolution, but could not fight successfully against cancer. He died in 1978. ■

Blood red: Ralph Fasanella's unfinished Spanish painting

by Harry Fisher

Many paintings by Lincoln Brigade veteran Ralph Fasanella were bought by wealthy people. They kept them in their homes. But, as Ralph told a reporter from the Providence Sunday Journal in 1989, "I didn't paint my paintings to hang in some rich guy's living room. My paintings are about people and they should be seen by people, not hidden away." That interview sparked the formation of grassroots committees to "ransom" Ralph's paintings from the rich and give them to the people.

The Massachusetts committee, which included Senator Ted Kennedy, raised \$100,000 to buy Ralph's Bread and Roses from its owner. The painting depicts the historic textile workers' strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. It is now displayed there in a museum. Every annual Labor Day holiday, it is the site of a commemorative celebration.

One of Ralph's dreams was to create a painting on the Spanish Civil War. Six years ago, Ralph asked me to invite some Lincoln veterans to my

Harry Fisher, an Abraham Lincoln veteran, is the author of the forthcoming memoir, Comrades.

home to probe their ideas for this project. Steve Nelson, George Watt, Charles Nusser, Jack Shafran and one or two other vets showed up. He told us that this painting would be his masterpiece and he wanted our suggestions for it. We spent several hours mulling ideas. After they had left, Ralph said that he liked some of their ideas but he was still uncertain of his approach, his angle.

Ralph, many times afterward, told me that he had trouble sleeping while mulling over what the painting should contain. At last, about two years ago, he asked me to come over to his studio because he finally had it figured out. After I arrived, with pencil in hand he drew a map of Spain. Around its border he sketched smaller maps of all the countries that had sent volunteers to the International Brigades. He said that he would show, within the U.S. map, the scenes of the historic events that he felt had radicalized the Americans who had gone to Spain. These included some major strikes, the martyrdom of Sacco and Vanzetti and the trial of the Scottsboro Boys.

Ralph continued: There would be portraits of some Americans — Steve Nelson, Oliver Law, Jack Shirai, Milt Wolff, Phil Detro, Hans Amlie and Herman Boettcher. These would demonstrate that the Lincolns were

themselves a multinational U.S. contingent of the IB. Within the map of Spain, Ralph also planned to illustrate the battles in which the Americans fought, and scenes of the savage fascist bombings — Madrid, Barcelona and Guernica — that killed so many civilians.

This painting was to be Ralph's largest: 15 feet by seven or eight feet. At its bottom, he planned to list names of the Americans who went to Spain. He wasn't sure that he would have room for all 2,800, but there would certainly be the 900 who died there, plus those who perished in World War II. They would be painted in red — blood red.

Ralph wanted this painting to be a history lesson for young people, something from which they could learn a lot — just by studying it while it hung on a wall somewhere. Most importantly, he wanted to show world solidarity with Spain. He felt that never in history had there been such unity where people from more than 50 countries were all working for the same goal. This painting would show them streaming into Spain from all their separate countries.

Sadly for all of us, Ralph's many hospitalizations, during his last two years, made it impossible for him to begin work on this masterpiece. ■

Culling the mail sack

Visit to Madrid

While in Madrid on vacation recently, we popped into the offices of AABI (the Amigos) where we met with Juan Rey who speaks excellent English. He described some of their current activities. They are making a concerted effort to educate Spain's youngsters about the Civil War and the role of the Brigades ... (In Barcelona) we took a packaged tour which ended up at the Valle de los Caidos. My wife and traveling companion asked our guide if there also was memorial to the Republican dead.. He looked somewhat sheepish and conceded there wasn't. We decided to stay on our bus, although I would have liked to make sure that Franco was still dead.

At a flea market in El Rastro, we came across a literature table of the CNT/FAI. It was staffed by young people — pretty much as kids in the U.S. who staff IWW tables. —

lots of pamphlets by Bahkunun, not much about unions.

Speaking of unions, we came across an encampment of protesting unionists across the street from the Prado Museum in Madrid. Their factory shut-down and didn't pay them back wages. Adding insult to injury, the owner is the current Minister of Economics in the PP government. The worker/campers were organized by the Workers' Commissions and were doing a good job of getting their message out. We talked a while about plant shutdowns in Chicago and Madrid, about NAFTA and Maastricht. These workers complain that their jobs are leaving the country for even lower wage areas such as Taiwan.

We really loved Spain, even for such a short visit. It's not hard to see why people fall in love with the place.

James H. Williams, Chicago

Added to Memory's Roster

Frances Patai

A long-time friend of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Frances Patai, died on January 19. Her death inspired the poem by Debra Bernhardt. Mrs. Patai graduated from the City College of New York (CCNY), and taught at John Jay College and at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. She had been at work on "Heroines of the Good Fight," a study of American nurses who volunteered to assist the Spanish Republic. Her research notes were donated to ALBA, and are now at Brandeis University. Mrs Patai also bequeathed a substantial sum of money to endow a course on the Holocaust at CCNY's Center for Worker Education. ■

Jacob Epstein

Lincoln veteran Jacob Epstein, died in New York City on March 10 at the age of ninety-four. Sixteen months earlier, Ruth, Jacob's wife, also a Lincoln Brigade veteran, had passed away. (see *The Volunteer*, Winter 1996-97.)

Jacob reached Spain in September 1938. He joined Ruth, who, for the prior year-and-a half, had been serving as a nurse-administrator with the American Medical Unit. After a brief reunion with Ruth, Jacob was assigned to the Medical Service of the 15th Brigade and was sent to the IB hospital in Mataro as American commissar. He remained at that post until the International Brigades were withdrawn from Spain in December 1938.

Jacob's path to Spain was unusual. He was a graduate of Cornell University, a rare exemption to the Ivy League's rigid anti-semitic admissions policy of the time. Intelligent and sensitive to the economic and political struggles of the depression, Jacob was active in the organizing campaigns of the burgeoning Local 65, United Wholesale and Retail Workers Union in New York City. When he left for Spain he was the union treasurer.

In the post-Spain years of war and FBI harassment, Jacob and Ruth persisted on the path that had brought them to Spain. Surmounting the difficulties of the McCarthy era and working as a team they became successful designers and suppliers of custom office furniture.

Even in their physically debilitated tenth decade, Jacob and Ruth persisted in support of the struggles for peace and democracy that had inspired their service in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. ■

Martha Gellhorn

Martha Gellhorn, truly a pioneer woman war correspondent, died in London on February 15, after what she called, "a too long and boring illness." Her career began in the besieged and bombed Madrid of 1937. She paved the way for the many female war correspondents who followed.

In all the wars she later covered, her reportage was truly distinct –

Requiem for La Pasionaria of Washington Square

by Debra E. Bernhardt

for Frances Patai, October 1997

Did you pass
as you arranged to
your molten soul
given over to the
cool caresses of
nuns — strangers,
professionals
who didn't judge
and wouldn't notice you had left
a few crusades unwon
you, born a socialist
grown agnostic but not unbelieving
cosmopolitan rooted
not in place
but class
elegant
intimate of diplomats
academics, veterans of the
Abraham Lincoln
brigade
the hapless
hookers?

Or did your spirit
simply break
free as you reclined
like a tragedienne alone
on your sun-bathed divan
skin perfect and
cold as marble
profile chiselled to clarity
dying a socialist
with grace
did it radiate
through the window
of your upper room
into the yard of urban sky
to come raining down
like Joe Hill's ashes
blessing your comrades?

Debra E. Bernhardt is director of the Robert F. Wagner Archives, NYU.

Added to Memory's Roster

imbued always with her passionate partisanship as a soldada in the Good Fight. Martha was a beloved, unswerving compañera of the Lincoln Brigade – just last spring contributing to our children's hospital in Havana, in honor of the 60th Anniversary of the International Brigade's baptism of fire in the defense of Madrid. She will be missed.

Following is a letter Martha sent to Milt Wolff from London, in July 1997.

Dear Milt,

Did you know there was a memorial statue, or something, to the International Brigades here on the South Bank somewhere near Festival Hall? I have never seen it as that's far off my beat but I am asked by the British Brigaders to a celebration there on 19 July, I have been to one meeting of theirs in the Imperial Museum where the Spanish Ambassador spoke (how times change), And Laurie Lee swanked about pretending he had been in the International Brigades during the war. He has since died amidst universal praise and admiration. I never could stand him, though he is a writer of talent, because he is a complete liar, a self-made myth.

I continue to be full of hope about our new government here which advances steadily trying to keep all its manifesto promises. There is, as usual, no money in the government bank account, so I imagine they will raise their taxes within two years.

I had occasion to write to Mrs. Clinton and took a chance to make an impassioned statement about Cuba, hoping it might reach the President. On the other hand, it is Congress which thinks up new means of oppression

against Cuba. Sickening injustice.

I do not wage the good fight; I do nothing at all being unable to

write properly. ... I realized the other day that you are the last person alive whom I know from my long lost real life. I miss Freddy [Keller-Ed]. Not to mention Capa and many others. I do not enjoy the position of sole survivor. You are active and valuable so your life is worthwhile.

Love, Martha

Isadore Tivin

Isadore Tivin, Lincoln veteran, died at his home in Ventura, California, on February 27, 1997, at the age of 90. Arriving in Spain in early April 1937, he served in the Brunete campaign and was invalided home after a bout with typhus in September 1938.

Born in Chicago, Izzy, a trained draftsman, moved with his family to Los Angeles during World War II. He worked there in war industry and later at Lockheed Aircraft for 20

years. In his spare time he coached basketball and football in Los Angeles public schools. ■

Leonard Olson

Lincoln veteran Leonard Olson, a member of the VALB Bay Area Post, died on May 4 at the age of 96. He was born in the Mesabi (iron ore) Range of Northern Minnesota to a family of 10. His parents ran a boarding house and apprenticed him out to many trades. Olson came to unionism when he joined the International Workers of the World, the "Wobblies," in the 1920s. He later worked to build the CIO's National Maritime Union, organizing sailors on the Great Lakes. He shipped out for many years and later worked as a carpenter, active in his local union.

At the age of 34, working in Alaska, Olson heard about the Spanish Civil War. He volunteered in San Francisco to join the International Brigades and, in January 1938, sailed on the Cunard liner President Roosevelt to France. After scaling the Pyrenees, he joined the Lincoln Battalion as a machine gunner.

During the ill-fated Ebro retreat in March 1938, he found himself behind fascist lines. After six days, walking by night and eating what he could find, he swam the Ebro, carrying his papers and his gun on his head. A Republican supporter found and fed him and directed him to IB headquarters.

Later, assigned to the MacPaps, he received a head wound.

Future tasks of the AABI

by Ana Perez

One year ago the new Governing Committee of the Asociación de Amigos de las Brigadas Internacionales (AABI) was elected. What better moment than now to review what has occurred this past year. The thrust of our efforts has been in two major directions which are closely linked: to strengthen our organization and to reach out to the general public.

Internally, AABI is a stronger organization based on the active and democratic participation of its members. The number of members has increased as well as the percentage of those who regularly participate in set work groups. Today there are over thirty friends, ranging from 20 to 78 years of age, working earnestly in a variety of areas and with differing degrees of responsibility.

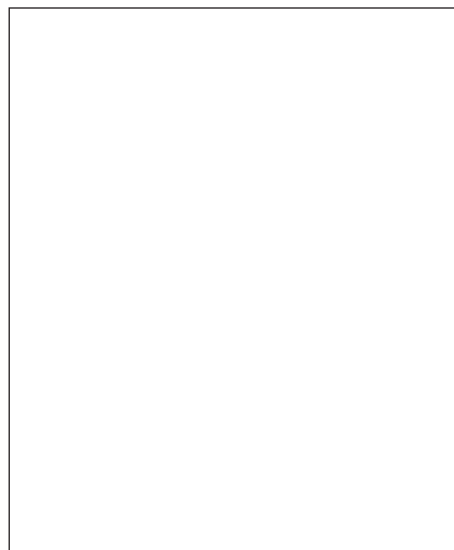
We have also strengthened our contacts and activities beyond the association. Firstly, we enjoy a constant and fraternal relationship with International Brigade veterans, to whom we are deeply grateful for their continued support and encouragement. This proximity has intensified through numerous trips during which we have exchanged points of view on our activities and heard their valuable suggestions. A delegation of AABI youths took part in the International Youth Festival in Cuba and met with Cuban IB veterans. In both London and Berlin we attended International Brigade anniversary events. In Luxembourg we participated in the premier official recognition of veterans from the Great Duchy where a monument was dedicated in their honor for the first time ever in that country.

In another area, AABI has deepened its close working relationship with those political parties and trade unions which supported us on the nationality issue and the organization of the *Homenaje* of 1996. Evidence of this were the invitations received by

Ana Perez is Chair of the Asociación de Amigos de las Brigadas Internacionales, Madrid.

AABI to participate in the annual weekend festival of the Spanish Communist Party, the guest invitation to the Federal Congress of the United Left (Izquierda Unida), and to the Madrid Federation of the General Union of Workers (UGT). We have also continued our policy of dialogue with official institutions. AABI activities in Spain are the direct results of these relationships.

Over the last twelve months another interesting development has attracted our attention. In several European countries associations of



Ana Perez

friends and family of the International Brigades have sprung up, the aim of which is to work in their respective countries to keep the memory of the Volunteers for Liberty alive. There are now associations in England, Ireland, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and Russia, not to mention France, where one such organization has existed for some time. We maintain fraternal relations with these associations and we believe the objective should be to create an international network, whose characteristics remain to be established, to include all the existing organizations with similar aims. Such a network

would be very useful to exchange information and collaborate in diverse activities. Above all, it would be a touching way to recover the interna-

tionalism of the Volunteers for Liberty.

With respect to AABI activities, the most important achievement has been the agreement reached with the Regional Government of Castilla-La Mancha to create the International Brigade Archives in Albacete. By doing so we have met the first commitment for which AABI was born, and complied with the wishes of the brigaders: that the Archives be in Albacete, that same city where it all began. We have received letters from veterans the world over expressing their satisfaction with this achievement and offering us material to enhance its holdings. Our hope is that over time it will become a documentary monument to the Volunteers for Liberty.

A key element to increase the public awareness of AABI is the exhibit on the International Brigades which, along with varied cultural activities, will travel around Spain over the next two years. Standing out among the planned events for the present year is the First International Meeting on the International Brigades to be held in October in Getafe, Madrid.

Lastly, we must not forget the solidarity campaign carried out to offer assistance to Bulgarian and Rumanian brigaders and their widows who are in dire economic situations. We are also helping our Cuban friends especially by acquiring needed medicines. This campaign has already benefited those whom it was intended to help. We are also helping our Cuban friends especially by acquiring needed medicines. These campaigns have benefited from the generous contribution of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, as well as that of veterans from other western countries. In Spain, members, friends, political parties and trade unions are also doing their part in this drive.

As can be seen through this rapid presentation, globally speaking it has been a positive year. All the better to encourage us to continue our efforts with renewed enthusiasm to continue with all our projects. ■

¡Criminales!

This paper is adapted from a lecture the author gave at New York University's King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center on the occasion of ALBA's "The Aura of the Cause" exhibit in November of 1997. In attendance were some seventy people, among them a number of veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade who were introduced and honored as a part of the evening's events. The lecture was followed by a panel discussion that included Lincoln Brigade veteran Len Levenson and ALBA board members Peter Carroll, Tony Geist and Andrew Lee. The evening's events, which concluded with a wonderful reception in the Center's beautiful lobby, were hosted by the Center's Acting Director, Jim Fernandez. During the lecture I offered detailed interpretations of a number of Spanish Civil War photographs posters and poems, in part to show how interconnected all these antifascist cultural efforts were during the war. But I also wanted to show that civil war photographs and posters deserve the same detailed analysis and commentary that other important works of art and history have received.

by Cary Nelson

Viewed from across the street, the image is only an icon of anguish. "¡Criminales!" the poster cries out across the top, in angular lettering that appears to have been laid out with a palette knife. And everyone in the city of Madrid knows who these criminals are; they have been killing friends and neighbors all autumn. Their weapon of choice plummets through the poster in minimalist outline, a tear-shaped aerial bomb trailing its telltale fins. But everyone knows that simple shape and what it can bring into his or her life. Its merest outline evokes that complex of fear and anger that now shapes daily life. And all who pass by know as well as the mother who fills the poster with her pain; she is the city's everywoman, carrying the dead child who belongs to each of us, our murdered future, the generation of young dying amidst the ruins of the capital.

The cry she utters is so loud it seems to still the motion in the street, though it is soundless. Even from a distance the hollow oval of her mouth speaks to those who see the poster. Indeed her eyes and mouth are rendered with but a few bold

brush strokes, rude archetypes of a mother's absolute loss. Some, more visually trained, may recognize an allusion to Edvard Munch's famous 1893 expressionist painting *The Scream*, where a woman's terror has no explicit stimulus. But the artist who signed himself "RAS" here, in 1936, references a specific historical cause – the mass bombing of civilian targets by Hitler's Condor Legion and its fascist allies. This is no nameless terror; these conscript soldiers cannot be given individual names, but their politics and their loyalties give them the only name they need.

As the woman carries her dead child in her arms, beneath a uniform blood-red sky that will sustain no gradation in tones, her face is swept clean of any personal characteristics, its features sheerly symbolic. But as our eyes travel down to the child in her arms we may notice an entirely different style brush stroke: intricately detailed and carefully drawn hands that grant every element of care to the child who

can no longer absorb it. If the woman's eyes and mouth lack definition, her hands, by contrast are meticulously defined. They are hands infinitely devoted to a mothering function now made obsolete, and her soundless cry testifies not only to the loss of her child but also to the loss of the identity the child sustained. As if to underline simultaneously the impossibility of helping the child and the driving need to help, the child's left arm lies limply across its chest, a feeble remnant of an effort to staunch the wound in its side. If there were any doubts about the poster's other symbolic referents, they now disappear, especially in Catholic Spain; the figure is a *pietà*, the mother Mary, the child the city's Christ. The sorrowing mother with her son across her knees echoes down through the centuries and comes to this: Mussolini's Romans murdering innocence yet again.

It is a brilliant stroke, transferring

Continued on page 23



Cary Nelson is Jubilee Professor of Literature at the University of Illinois, Champagne and an ALBA Executive Board Member.

Book Reviews



A turncoat's memoir

**JUMPING THE LINE:
THE ADVENTURES AND
MISADVENTURES OF AN
AMERICAN RADICAL**
by William Herrick
University of Wisconsin Press
283 pp., \$21.95. Cloth

by Clarence Kailin

The preface to this book by Paul Berman, a writer for the *Village Voice*, sets the tone for the entire book, charging that Oliver Law, an African-American Commander of the Lincoln Battalion, was assassinated by his own troops, urinated on, and left to rot, a big lie eagerly picked up by William Herrick who was not at the Brunete Front where Law's death in battle occurred. But the fact that witnesses in that battle totally contradict the Berman canard, meant nothing to either of them.

This outrageous tale has been traced to a fictional character in a Bernard Wolfe novel of 1959, *The Great Prince Died*.

A thorough reading of this volume, written by a Veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, a turncoat who testified against the VALB before the Subversive Activities Control Board (SACB) in the 1950s, has convinced this reviewer that this book should be listed as pure (really impure) fiction. The VALB was charged with being a Communist front (a charge dismissed by the United States Supreme Court). Herrick said that he testified "to get my union [the Federation of Shorthand Reporters] off the hook," and that the SACB attorney "told me that [for testifying] they would remove the Federation from the subversive list."

Clarence Kailin, a Veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, is a lifelong resident of, and political activist in, Madison, Wisconsin. His E-Mail is ckailin@earthlink.net

Herrick returned from Spain an embittered anti-Communist. This is the tiring, exhausting, non-stop thread that permeates the entire volume, greatly surpassing even the vivid imagination of Wisconsin's Joe McCarthy. He is so full of hate and venom that all logic and rationale regarding the history of the Spanish Civil War gets completely distorted, if not entirely lost.

He essentially denies that the struggle of the Volunteers was a fight against fascism, saying in his twisted way that the Volunteers fought for Stalin, that they were mostly Communists who were abject dupes and pawns of the Communist Party.

A sample of his perverted outlook (not to speak of his convoluted language) is Herrick's claim that "The ceaseless and ruthless use of the International Brigades by their commanders would lead one to believe that it was Stalin's orders that as many of these men as possible be sent to their deaths — they were just a bit too tough, too idealistic for his tastes."

More of Herrick's ideological broadsides: "My war was a just war destroyed by the duplicity and brutality of a revolutionary cause gone awry, a cause totally corrupted and finally demolished by its very own innate moral principle..."

Oh yes. He refers to Karl Marx as "that 19th century romantic." With total cynicism he says, "We have learned nothing." And elsewhere, "For Stalin, Spain was simply another card to be played in the International poker game. Long before the International Brigades and the Americans were withdrawn, and long before the war came to its bitter end, Adolph Hitler and Joseph Djugashvili were already sitting together planning how they were going to divvy up their winnings."

This tripe goes on and on. Stalin, Herrick claims, sent arms to Spain for the purpose of "brutish intervention."

Elsewhere, Stalin gets most of the blame for the loss of the war, but about the real truth of non-intervention, the key factor in strangling the Spanish Republic, Herrick gives us only "French non-intervention," with no further explanation. His cat-house exploits get a hundred times more space.

J. Alvarez del Vayo, Spain's Foreign Minister, in his book *Freedoms Battle*, states that the "London Committee" [the international creators and administrators of the so-called "non-intervention"-Ed] was the equivalent of Munich," the site where key sections of Europe were handed over to Hitler. Del Vayo adds:

"In 1936 the sound and healthy principle of non-interference was abandoned — was in fact reversed, by democratic countries of western Europe when they devised this strange thing called non-intervention, which became, in fact, a unilateral [German and Italian] intervention in favor of the rebels and against the Republic. By the end of Spring, 1938, the French frontier was hermetically sealed completely stopping the flow of arms [to our side]."

Because of this spurious "Non-Intervention," the Republic was outgunned and undersupplied in planes, tanks and guns by as much as 40 to 1. This is the real, tragic history of the Spanish Republic, but who does Herrick blame? Stalin!!

The Volunteers from the world over were acutely aware of the dangers they faced in coming to Spain, but they also knew knowing that Spain was the one place to stop the drive of fascism, and that the defeat of the Republic would lead to World War II.

Despite Herrick's slander and denigration, the VALB has a history we can all be proud of. Speaking at the 54th VALB Anniversary Luncheon on April 25, 1991, Rear Admiral Gene La Roque, U.S. Navy (Ret), told the Lincoln's, "The world remains fascinated by your valiant efforts to curb the onslaught of tyranny in Spain. I have always wondered how young men could have been

Continued on page 23

Memoir of a Turncoat

Continued from page 22

so bold, so brave, so prescient about what was to happen in Spain.”

Dolores Ibàrruri (La Pasionaria), Spain's most dynamic and inspiring leader, in her farewell address to the Volunteers in Barcelona, September 1938, described them as “the heroic example of democracy's solidarity and universality.”

Herrick's mentor was George Orwell, but Carl Marzani, an American Volunteer who had joined an anarchist unit, writes in the third volume of his autobiography, *The Education of a Reluctant Radical*: “On Orwell's mind, if Communist influence was paramount, then Prime Minister Negrín had to be, as he wrote, ‘Moscow's man.’”

Orwell got to know Negrín in London and realized his error and said so in private letters, but never said so publicly. He wrote in 1942: “The Trotskyite thesis that the war could have been won if the revolution had not been sabotaged is probably false... The Fascists won because they had modern arms and the others hadn't.”

Herrick will have none of this. With his morbid obsessions he appears to have a sick, troubled mind not to be taken seriously. ❏

Criminales

Continued from page 21

religious virtue and victimage to the children of a Republic widely famous for its anti-clericism. Yet who could deny these innocent victims their tragic status? And there is further specificity to the poster's politics, for if red is the color of the child's wound and the blood drips from his side, if red is the implicit color of the mother's cry of anguish and the explicit color of the nightmare sky above, it is also the source of the pun in the name of the poster's sponsor, the POUM's “Red Aid” (Socorro Rojo) and in the politics the poster thereby offers us as an alternative to the fascist murder – the politics of a revolutionary marxism. Red and black are also the anarchist colors of choice, so the poster's chromatic protest is offered in the person of the entire revolutionary left in Spain. The people's revolution, the poster implies, is the only full and appropriate response to fascist murder.

All these messages – redolent with political, religious, and artistic meaning – flow from what is after all a rather stark and simple poster, a poster designed to convey its message in a glance to people walking by on the street, which is where such posters were often displayed in wartime Spain. But of course Spanish citizens were well schooled in all this symbolism, just as they were soon well-schooled in the damage bombs could cause in a crowded city. ❏

Over two decades ago four veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade—Bill Susman, Leonard Lamb, Oscar Hunter and Morris Brier—created a new organization: ALBA, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, bringing in a group of scholars interested in the Spanish Civil War and the International Brigades.

From the outset, one of ALBA's main tasks was to help manage and expand the Spanish Civil War archive housed at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. Explicit in this undertaking were the educational goals of preserving, disseminating and transmitting to future generations the history and lessons of the Spanish Civil War and of the International Brigades.

To carry out these goals ALBA, in collaboration with VALB, publishes *The Volunteer*. ALBA also collaborates on the production of books, films and videos, maintains a website at www.alba-valb.org, helps send exhibitions of photographs, documents and artwork throughout the United States and Canada, and organizes conferences and seminars on the Spanish Civil War and on the role of the International Brigades in that conflict, and

afterward. ALBA has established the George Watt Memorial prizes for the best college and graduate school essays on these subjects, and has designed a widely-used Spanish Civil War high school and college curriculum.

In the coming months and years ALBA will greatly expand its activity. To do so effectively ALBA must have your support. Please fill out the coupon below,

enclose a \$25 check (or larger amount) made out to ALBA and send it to us. It will insure that those of you who are not veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, or family members of a veteran, will continue to receive *The Volunteer*, and will enjoy other benefits of Associate status.



Fill out this coupon and send it to the address indicated below.

- Yes, I wish to become an ALBA Associate, and I enclose a check for \$25 made out to ALBA. Please send me *The Volunteer*.
- I would also like to receive a list of books, pamphlets and videos available at discount.
- I would like to have ALBA's poster exhibit, *Shouts from the Wall*, in my locality. Please send information.
- I would like to have ALBA's photo exhibit, *The Aura of the Cause*, in my locality. Please send information.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I enclose an additional donation of _____. I wish do not wish to have this donation acknowledged in *The Volunteer*.

Please mail to: ALBA, 799 Broadway, Room 227, New York, NY 10003



Contributions



Mark & Jeanette Alper, for Al Warren, \$50 ♣ Eugene Baron, in honor of Saul Wellman, \$25 ♣ Milton and Louise Becker in memory of Sidney Roland and Mac Sandroff, \$100 ♣ Aaron Beckerman, in honor of Irving Weissman, \$100 ♣ Mitch Berenson, \$1,000 ♣ Helen Burns, in memory of Paul Burns, \$25 ♣ Julie Davis Carran in memory of Al Warren, \$30 ♣ Trudy & George David, \$25 ♣ Paulette Nusser Dubetz, in memory of Charles Nusser, \$100 ♣ Lester Fein in memory of Dick Fein, \$100 ♣ Professor Bill Fisher, \$20 ♣ Dr. Alfred Gellhorn, in memory of Martha Gellhorn, \$65 ♣ Fred Greitzer, in memory of Al Warren \$50 ♣ Lottie Gordon, in memory of Dave Gordon, \$10 ♣ Earl Harju, in memory of Howard Goddard, \$50 ♣ Gabriel Jackson, in memory of Bob Colodny, \$50 ♣ Ruth Klotzle, in memory of Al Warren, \$40 ♣ Helen Kusman, in memory of Felix Kusman, \$25 ♣ Leo & Hilda Lang, in honor of Leslie Kish, \$50 ♣ Oliver & Frances Loud, in memory of Sam Levinger, \$25 ♣ Harry & Elaine Mensh, \$175 ♣ Barbara-Lyle Mercer, in honor of Bob Reed, \$50 ♣ Jack & Marian Meyerson, in memory of Bess Polin, \$100 ♣ Mary & Tom O'Malley, in memory of Ken Bridenthal, \$25 ♣ Tim Parker, in memory of Max Parker, \$50 ♣ Brenda and Enrico Pinardi, in memory of Ralph Fasanella, \$25 ♣ Dante Puzo, in memory of Ralph Fasanella, \$100 ♣ Rose Rosen, \$25 ♣ George & Birdie Sossenکو, in memory of Lazar Udovicki, \$20 ♣ Sylvia Spiller, in memory of Mae Tisa, \$75 ♣ Eric Tabb & Jeanne Bourget, in memory of Martha Gellhorn, \$50 ♣ Bernard Tieger, in memory of Ruth Tieger, \$25 ♣ UNITE.-AFL-CIO, for Ralph Fasanella, \$100 ♣ Rudy Valuch, \$25 ♣ Victor Wallis, in memory of Martha Gellhorn, \$100 ♣ Ann Warren, in memory of Al Warren, \$1,000 ♣ David Warren, in memory of Al Warren, \$50 ♣ Herman E. Warsh, in memory of Ralph Fasanella, \$500 ♣ Joseph Weiss, in memory of Jack Weiss, \$100 ♣

The Volunteer

c/o Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade
799 Broadway, Rm. 227
New York, NY 10003

(Return Address Requested Please Forward)

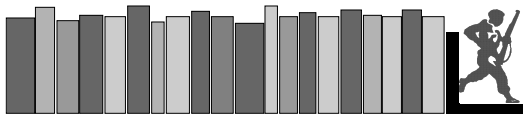
NON-PROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID PERMIT NO. 280 SHIRLEY, NY 11967
--

Vetting the News

Added to Memory's Roster

Culling the mail sack

Book Reviews



News From Abroad

Rebels Without a Pause

Contributions

