



The Volunteer

ORGAN OF
VETERANS OF THE
ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE

— "AND THAT GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE
PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE, SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE
EARTH."
Abraham Lincoln

VOL. 3 NO. 1. 1980



3650 Emerald, Apt. E-4 Torrance, CA 90503

FRISCO HONORS BLACK VETERANS

ED. BENDER

Over 850 people filled Goodman's Banquet Hall in Oakland on February 2 to commemorate the 43rd anniversary of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, and to pay tribute to the Black Volunteers who served in the Spanish Civil War.

This was by far the largest event in the history of the VALB in the Bay Area. The audience was representative of all sections of the people in our area. There were Blacks, Chicanos and Asian, young and old. There were present members and leaders of trade unions: Curtis McClain, secretary-Treasurer of the ILWU International, Larry Wing and Willie Zenn, president and vice-president Local 10 ILWU, George Kay, secretary-treasurer Local 10 ILWU; Leonard Emezell, President, Communication Workers and Marie Malliett, vice-president Communication Workers and many others. Represented were Women for Peace, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Gus Newport, Mayor of Berkeley, John Denton, Councilman of Berkeley, John George, Supervisor of Alameda County. There were writers and people of the arts—Kay Boyle, Jessica Mitford, Lester Cole, just to name a few. There were the old veterans and friends of the VALB—Harry Bridges and Lou Goldblatt. Also a group of Spanish Republicans from San Francisco were present.

There was a festive mood in the hall. The audience cheered when the children and grandchildren of the Vets were asked to rise and there were many of them, Fritz Grell, a member of our post alone brought some 20 of his children and grandchildren to the dinner. There were 50 Bay Area vets and their families. Twenty vets and families came from Los Angeles, Seattle and as far East as Chicago and Minneapolis. We thank them for honoring us with their presence.

All of these came to honor the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln
CONT. PAGE 3



Congressman R.V. Dellums views saga of Black volunteers in Spanish civil war. Walter Garland on screen. Photo: Janet Yoshi



Some of the Vets children, grand children and vets wives.

Photo: Janie Yoshi

GINA MEDEM

By: Esther Sheehan,

Regarding the "statement by Gina Medem on Jewish Vets of the S.C.W." promised for the next issue of *The Volunteer*, I hope someone who knew her can prepare a short summary of some of her activities and/or life. Gina was a dear friend of mine, but I met her late in her life, when she was already living in the convalescent hospital.

During my brief visits, our conversation could range from the then-current war to the traffic on South La Cienega, reminiscences of her husband, the difficulty of translating puns from one language to another, a plot to vary her luncheon menus (a plot which failed), the care of house plants, her travels and lecture tour in Argentina and Brazil, her first impressions of Madrid—anything and everything that came into our heads. Her wit and charm gave me a hint of the courageous, brilliant woman she had been.

Her elegant English, spoken in her beautifully modulated voice, was a delight to hear, but she also read, wrote and had lectured in several other languages. Her bedside table, to the annoyance of her attendants, was always covered with stacks of periodicals and books in English, Yiddish, Russian, Polish.

Gina was no sweet little old lady. Her iconoclasm, expressed in salty terms, when confronted with pomposity, bureaucrats and stuffed shirts in general, was refreshing. Her contempt for the hospital administration was blistering, and I can imagine what her comments might have been about the fellow Pole who became Pope.

Friends concerned for her sent funds to ensure that she didn't lack for small comforts, but there was little she could use of materials things such as flowers, fresh fruit, postage stamps, cologne, slippers. What was left of her life was in her mind. It was always jolting to leave her after a visit, knowing the kind of spirit that was trapped in the worn out body. But she never permitted the indignities to which she was subjected by her physical condition to destroy her dignity or her perspective. **CONT. PAGE 11**

A TALE OF HEROINE-ISM

Up from the Cellar: An Autobiography,

by Lini de Vries

(Vanilla Press, 420 pp. \$9.95)

Excerpts by Susan Grieger

Lini de Vries is very much a woman of the twenty century in her seventy two years. This self-described idealist and humanist has been a nurse in the Spanish Civil War, and a public health administrator and teacher both in the United States and her adopted country. To put her story in perspective, I find myself turning not to contemporary feminist thought, but to the works of Louisa May Alcott. The world view embodied in *LITTLE WOMEN*, with its now-unfashionable combination of heroine-ism and unabashed sentiment, might have been the pattern of Lini de Vries' life. She finds personal salvation in "doing good." The child of Dutch immigrants, de Vries had a miserable childhood. The mother, having converted to the Dutch Reformed Church, is hysterically antisemitic. Shortly after her first love died of complications of diabetes, she began thinking about becoming a nurse. Vries' first husband died after a brief marriage, leaving her with a baby girl to support. Her second marriage to a shy photographer twelve years younger than she, ended in divorce.

Her style is at its worst rambling and repetitious. At its best it has the vividness of first-person reportage and the passion of sincere feeling. Her hatred of authoritarianism and prejudice, it seems, can be traced to the rebellion against her mother.

Early in life she had developed a passion for reading. Having worked in the textile mills and known tyranny at the hand of her mother, she developed an empathy for the poor and oppressed.

In 1937 de Vries volunteered for the medical corps in the Spanish Civil War.

She was not allowed to pursue the career she wanted, working for public health in the Western United States she had come to

A DANUBIAN JOURNEY

Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Graz

This was my first visit behind the mythic Iron Curtain—part busman's holiday, part an exploratory mission for my university. I carried letters of introduction to the Presidents of the National Academies of Science in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. I was, of course, eager to learn as much as possible about the progress of socialism in these ancient lands, but above all, to make contact with veterans of the International Brigades. (1200 from Austria, 1250 from Czechoslovakia and approximately 1300 from Hungary). In Prague, the Academy arranged a long interview for me with the Republic's foremost historian of the Spanish conflict, Dr. Neckarova, a charming and knowledgeable scholar, who has worked in the Benes archives. I learned something of the capitulationist attitudes of the Czech democrats who, a year before Munich, caved under Anglo-French pressure and established liaisons with the Fascist Junta, never deviating an inch from the policies of the London Committee of Non-Intervention. I had hoped to meet directly with some of the veterans, but this was not offered. I suspect that Czechoslovakia is still too close to the Slansky trials, the Dubcek tragedies etc. to look objectively at the role of her sons in Spain and later.

The atmosphere in Budapest was totally different. Shortly before my arrival from Vienna, the body of General Paul Lukacz (Mata Zelka), the one-time commander of the Twelfth International Brigade, had been brought back from its resting place in Spain for internment in Budapest. This ceremony was a state occasion to which came dignitaries from all over Europe. I might add that while going to an appointment at the Ministry of Culture, I learned that it was located on Ferencz Munich Square—a central location named in honor of another Hungarian veteran of the International Brigade. Imagine a Square in Washington named for Dave Doran or Robert Merriman!

The highlight of this trip was surely the day spent with the Hungarian veterans. They and their partisan veterans share a large building (across the street from the United States Embassy). They were delighted with their American visitor and answered all my questions without hesitation. The Hungarian veterans have very complete files of all these people, including those Magyar expatriates who went to Spain from France and Canada. Only 10% of the original contingent survived the fires of Spain, World War II and the revolutions that created the contemporary Peoples Republic. But these few have enjoyed esteem, honor and an imperishable place in the annals of their country. They expressed to me a profound desire to be in touch with their American Comrades.

I went from Vienna to Graz, and old university town in Austria where I was invited to give a formal lecture. My topic was Spain and Europe, A Perspective of Forty Years. The students in this conservative university had studied practically nothing about Spain and the epoch of the struggles against Fascism. They listened very intently and at the conclusion pounded on the tables—their equivalent of an ovation.

Robert G. Coldny

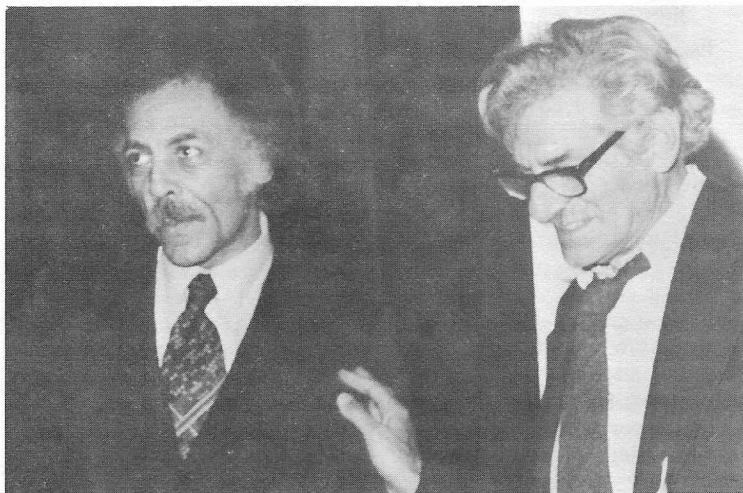
love. In job after job she was plagued by FBI inquiries about her acquaintances. In 1949 she sought the freedom of Mexico. There she found friends, important work. Eventually she became a public health worker for the Papaloapan Commission.

With typical dedication de Vries trekked through the mountains by mule and survived a bout with malaria while teaching about health in remote villages. The book ends in 1962 with Lini working at a new job as a teacher of anthropology and public health at the University of Veracruz. It was in that year also that she became, by Presidential decree, a Mexican citizen. Today at 72, she is still working, still teaching.

Up from the Cellar is a story of personal triumph against immense odds. There is enduring value in her life story.

Ed. Note: Anyone wanting to buy a copy, 420 pages \$9.95, please write Lini de Vries, Humbolt 306, Cuernavaca, Mexico.

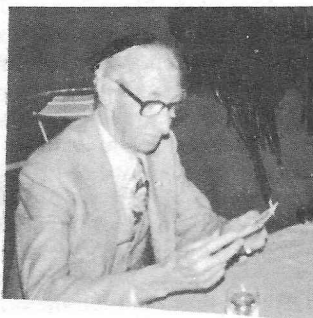
FRISCO HONORS BLACK VETERANS



Congressman Ronald V. Dellums and Milton Wolf



Margaret Nelson, Steve Nelson,
Marion Wachtel. Photo Gabby



Harry Bridges



Ltor Charles, Helen Feinberg, Ruth
Davidow, Fienberg daughter, guest
Butch Goldstein. Photo Gabby

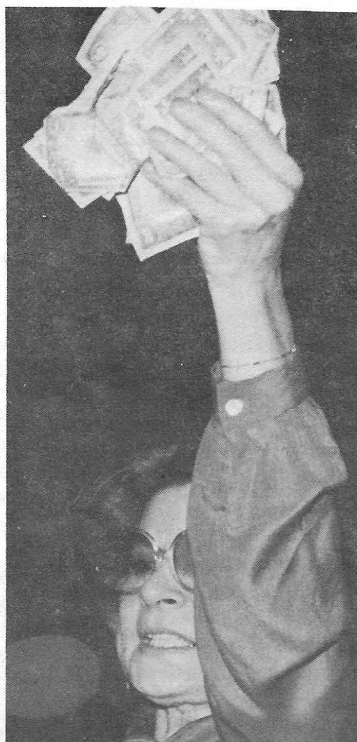


Curley Mende, Fred Keller, Duncan
Kier, guest Norm Perlman.

Brigade and to hear our distinguished guest and principal speaker, Congressman Ronald V. Dellums of the Bay Area. Congressman Dellums, author of H.R. 259, the Veterans Rights Bill for the Americans who served in the Spanish Civil War on the side of the Republic, was introduced by Milt Wolff and was given a standing ovation. He lashed out at President Carter for whipping up a cold war hysteria. He called it "madness and insanity". He warned that the foreign policy of Carter and the runaway military budget will be at the expense of the social needs of the American people. He stated his opposition to the draft. He called upon the audience to emulate the "premature anti-fascists" of the 30's who went to fight fascism in Spain, and become the premature fighters of the 80's against the nuclear warmongers.

The program of the dinner included the showing of the "Saga of the Black Volunteers" narrated by the Bay Area poetess, Carol Henry Dennis and dramatist James Mott. Our fellow vet, Nate Thornton, was the projectionist. Ed Balchowsky, a member of our Post, who lost an arm as a result of a wound in Spain, performed at the piano (with one hand) and sang the songs of the Brigade. The program was opened by Milt Wolff, Post Commander. David Thompson, who is chairman pro-tem of the Veterans Rights Campaign, was the Master of Ceremonies. Sharing the podium were Steve Nelson, National Commander and his wife, Margaret, Fred Keller, Commander L.A. Post, Oiva Halonen, Commander Seattle Post, Marion Meriman Wachtel, post Commander Bay Area Post, Marjorie Boehm, National President Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and her husband, Jeff and the narrators of the "Saga". The audience responded generously to an appeal made, by Frieda Wolff for funds to continue aid to the Ex-Presos in Spain and for the work of the VALB by contributing the sum of \$5,731.00.

There were greetings from Cardiss Collins, member of Congress and **Chairman** of Congressional Black Caucus, Jane Fonda, Isabel Letelier, Ex-Presos and ADAR from Spain. The committee that put the dinner together consisted of Frieda Wolff, Chairperson, Milt Wolff, Marion Bender, Ed. Bender, Al Stanley, Stan Junas, Don MacLeod and Sarland Zac Stadt. But is in *the many member of the Bay Area Post* that should be saluted for making this memorable event possible.



Frieda Wolff taking collection.
Photo Janet Yoshi



Al Stanley with children and grand-
children. Photo: Janet Yoshi



Entrance to dinner.

JACK HASHOOLEY

JACK HASHOOLEY, my but he was long-legged! How do I know? I tried to keep up with him that long night when, at twilight, having slaughtered a large number of us, the Fascists marched us into their camp as prisoners. But Jack wasn't taking it; and informing the small group around him where we were, he took off and after him a little runt from Brooklyn with a couple of hundred rounds of ammo (or at least it seemed so) from the Maxim on him. And so we ran, with Moros on horseback after us. We were two days getting back to Mora, with Jack as guide and pacer. I remember his gentleness in putting a good deal of the Maxim and its ammo on his own back, for Jack was disciplined and the scarce stuff was to be used again.

And so it was — in the Ebro Offensive. This time, while in a heavy machine unit, I suddenly saw stars. Dragged out by Marcus Ransome, I ended up next to Jack on a bench outside a field hospital behind the lines. The young Spanish Medical Alferes looked us over. He asked questions which I could not answer, for I had lost all command of speech. Again Jack helped: The bullet entered here. But where had it gone out of the head? It had not. The rest is history for me. I was operated on in the hospital train, the bullet was extracted, and I was off to the rear — never to see Jack again.

And now he is no longer with us. A personal loss, yes, of a comrade of the best order!

Hi Tabb



PIETRO NENNI



AARON HARRIS

PIETRO NENNI

Due to a heart attack, the president of the Italian Socialist party died in Rome last month.

At 88 years of age, Nenni was one of the most well known and prestigious of all the present leaders of the socialists in the entire world. During the war in Spain in 1936, Nenni, sent by the international socialists movement, occupied in Spain the position of head of coordination of all its aid to Spain and educational information.

After bringing about the reunification of the two existing Italian Socialist Partys, Nenni was elected its Secretary General and realized in 1934 the pact of unity and action with the Communists to arrest the advance of Fascism in Europe.

After the Second World War, he was Vice President of the Governments of the Left Center that were headed by Aldo Moro and was minister of Exterior Affairs in 1947 and 1969.

WILLIAM STONE

A month ago I travelled to Rockford, Ill. in search of William Stone. I was too late. He died Sept. 10, 1979. He was 68 years old.

Bill is one of our unsung Veterans. No index in any ALB book lists his name.

He, from Rockford, and I, from Rock Island, were sleeping neighbors for 17 months in San Pedro de Cardena, Franco's concentration camp. Did he know as little about me as I do about him? Those of us west of Chicago knew Rockford as a very conservative town where people looked askance at one who raised his voice. William was the only "premature" antifascist from there but he remained a quiet and gentle man.

We ran the usual gauntlet of flailing sticks and whips and lined up for chow. Dried sardines with crawling maggots. Our underground grapevine PASSED THE word — "Don't eat the stuff". Bill threw his to the ground, rubbed his stomach — "Wonder what they taste like?"

At a time when the people of Rockford were pro Franco and major corporations in the US were dedicated to a fascist victory, what made Bill to go Spain? He worked in the town's major industry—furniture. It was unorganized but the "C.P. had come to town to try and change that". Bill never joined anything but according to his half brother "did get involved in union building". "He was never a joiner," a friends with whome he fished regularly said, "Bill was always well liked, never excited but always preferred to stay in the background".

He sailed for Spain on the Pres. Roosevelt 12/24/37 and returned on the same boat Sept. 6, 1939.

He returned to Rockford and floated from job to job — roofer, iron worker, carpenter. It was a time of blacklisting, harassment and often unemployment.

He spoke little of Spain. His friend, Johnson, said, "He was almost a gentle man. I sort of recall he was in Spain, a POW I think. He spoke little about it." His brother, Bob, who publishes a weekly newspaper, said, "We had two different mothers. Bill never joined anything. He was very quiet. Loved his wife. She died a year before. That threw him on the skids and he drank a lot. I recall his gentle strength and his goodness of heart."

We know so little about the details of Bill's life. The Rockford library has set up a biographical folder. Do you have anything at all? Please send it to Mrs. O.B. Lunde, Rockford Public Library, 215 No. Wyman, Rockford, Ill. 61101.

There is a no man's land between the conviction and action into which most of mankind never ventures. Bill did.

Bob Steck

AARON HARRIS

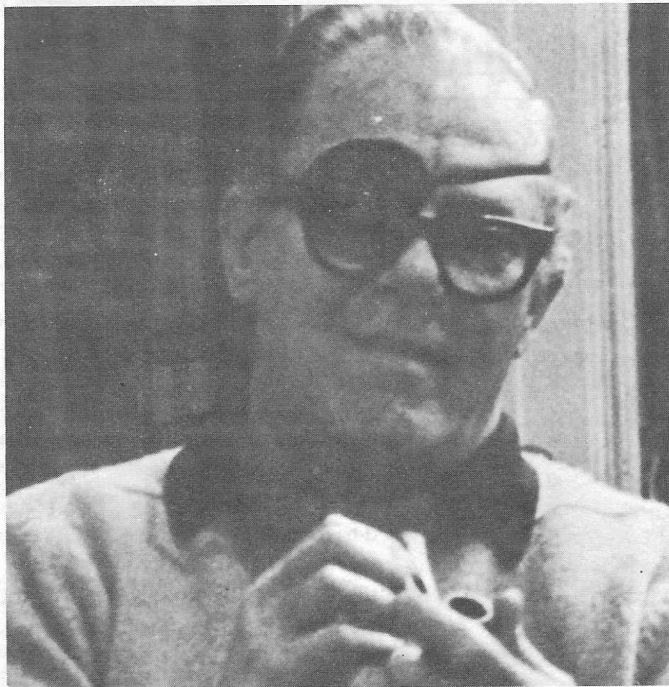
One of the first Americans to volunteer for the fight against fascism in Spain, Aaron Harris, who lost an eye at Jarama, died February 4th of Parkinson's disease in the U.S. Public Hospital on Staten Island, New York. He was 74 years old.

Aaron was a member of that first group of American volunteers that shipped out of New York for Spain on Christmas Even 1936 and after a brief train period at Villanueva de la Jara moved on to Morata and the Jarama front. A member of the second infantry company, commanded by Lieutenant Eugene Morse, he fought in the Lincoln's first Jarama battle on February 23, 1937. A bad head wound received on February 27th, date of the second battle in which Americans were engaged, resulted in the loss of an eye.

It was typical of the man that before his convalescence was anywhere near completion and while awaiting further medical treatment in New York, he was back on the picket lines for the Spanish Republic with a black patch over an empty eye socket. He was, of course, one of the founders of the VALB.

New Yorkers will remember his reports following visits to Lincoln men in hospitals or confined to their homes by illness or as a consequence of wounds received in Spain or, in some instances of wounds from World War Two. For his part, those visits were not only an obligation but a point of honor which he continued even after he was virtually crippled by arthritis. Cont Page 5.

MEMORIAMs



"They did their job quietly and well, were wounded in battle after battle, and always returned. . . men, like. . . Gerry Cook who remained strong and predictable in their courage and steadfastness throughout the long war." Edwin Rolfe, The Lincoln Battalion

CONNIE STROBEL

Dear Mannie:

I don't know whether or not you knew Connie, but she was a very special person. I hope you can print these few inadequate words in the "Volunteer".

After a long illness Connie Strobel is gone. The many vets who knew her and shared the warmth of her gracious hospitality will feel her loss deeply.

She was Ruby Kaufman's widow, a close comrade and friend from the earliest Jarama days.

Connie met and married Ruby when she was working for the public employees union for which Ruby was organizing at the time.

Along with her union activities she was involved in helping minority women to prepare themselves for better-paying jobs. She subsequently was employed by a large corporation as an office supervisor where, along with her union activities and throughout her life, she was an active anti-fascist and supported many progressive causes.

Connie was always a voice for peace through the Viet Nam war and for improvement of the human condition everywhere. That voice has been stilled and will be sadly missed in the immediate future.

Salud, Pazy Amor,
Bill Wheeler

A militant member of the Furriers Union, Local 64, Aaron was always available for picket line duty to make democracy work. This was noted during his funeral services, on February 6th, by Henry Foner, President of the Joint Board of Fur, Leather and Machine Workers and by Morris Brier, N.Y. Post Treasurer. The funeral services were attended by many Lincoln vets who knew Aaron in Spain or later.

Our deepest sympathy to his wife Helen, his son Richard, his daughter Barbara and two grand-daughters. We share with them a great sense of loss and an understanding and appreciation of his worth.

Paul Burns for the New York Post

GERRY COOK

MILT WOLFF

Gerald Cook came to Spain and the Battle of Brunete fresh from the picket lines and organizing battles — for that is what they were in the early 30's, virtually pitched battles between the bosses and the workers — being waged on the streets of New York. Those hard times — the desperate years of the Great Depression, the emergence of Fascism and the imminence of another murderous world war — fixed forever the course of his life. Stripped of ideological labels and philosophical pigeon-holes, Cook, child of Irish rebels, himself chose to champion the cause of working men and women everywhere. He was then a member of the Young Communists League, a trade union activist, and always a fighting anti-fascist.

On the very last day of our last action on the Ebro front — a day of heavy bombardment, many losses and a devastating attack on our lines — when the smoke had cleared and the clamor of battle had died away and we had a chance to sort everything out, we were but a few holding a very thin line against further losses; and Cook was there setting up his machine gun for a last stand. Twice he was singled out for commendatory citations.

As Secretary of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, he defended the organization in a hearing before the infamous Dies' Un-American Activities Committee. Shortly thereafter, he landed in jail — Riker's Island — for 45 days, having been one of the organizers and participants in a picket line before the French Consulate across the street from St. Patricks on Fifth Avenue. This was an area that Mayor LaGuardia had declared off-limits to demonstrators. But the French were on the verge of sending thousands of Spanish Republican refugees back into Franco Spain where many of them faced certain death or imprisonment, and neither Cook nor VALB would stand still for that. That picket line tied up Fifth Avenue for hours and certainly helped in changing the minds of the French.

On June 22, 1942, Gerry volunteered himself into the U.S. Army where he, like other "premature anti-fascists", got the usual run-around accorded all "shady" characters. Stuck in something called "Branch Immaterial", an appellation describing its non-functional character perfectly, he only managed to escape into the Infantry by taking to the air (radio) at Camp Wheeler to laud that branch of the service at the behest of the Commanding General who was sorely in need of foot-soldiery, the least glamorous of the services.

Cook managed to get himself transferred to the Amphibian Branch of the Infantry where he served with distinction in France and Germany, winning a Bronze Star and a field promotion to the rank of Captain. For some of the men who served under him and maintained contact with him almost to the day he died it was, in their words ". . . the most meaningful experience . . ." in their lives.

The war over, Cook began a new career on the staff of the *Daily Worker*, going on to do reporter's work in a variety of magazines, periodicals and trade union organs, the last with Local 1199. What is truly memorable about his life in journalism is that everyone who worked with him learned from him. Those he helped spoke of him with affection and gratitude.

He met every man without hostility, willing to lend a hand to whatever project seemed in its own right worthwhile doing. From his hospital bed he offered to help put together a booklet stating the case for entitling veterans of the war in Spain World War II rights and benefits. He knew he had not much time left, but he faced the prospect with true grace, determined to keep on contributing to "the work that must be done", as the old revolutionary song goes, and grateful for the time he had been given to do what he had done.

For us who loved him, it was not time enough.

Report From Madrid

Boycott, Oil and Democracy

Murray Polner

Madrid may be the graffiti capital of the western world. Fascist and anti-Semitic scrawlings and posters are literally everywhere—on the walls of fashionable apartment houses and chic boutiques in serene neighborhoods and in less well-favored sections of this elegant city.

Other evidences of the post-Franco era are visible, of course—including slogans of the once-powerful but now-miniscule anarchist movement, communist calls for general strikes, anti-nuclear posters, signs urging removal of American air bases, scrawls supporting and opposing Basque, Catalan and Andalusian home rule, calls for socialist electoral victories. (After losing in the March 1979 general elections, the Spanish Workers Socialist Party won municipal elections in Madrid, Barcelona, Seville, Valencia and other large cities). Yet all this autonomist and leftwing sloganeering pales by comparison with the massive outpouring of hate from the right—from the omnipresent red-yellow-and-red banners of the Falange to Blas Piñar's Fuerza (New Force) neo-Nazi party. Few doubt that Fuerza supporters are responsible for most of the graffiti, especially the ubiquitous swastikas.

No wonder, then, that the new Spanish democracy which seemed to arise after Franco's death may appear to be in danger of slipping back into the grasp of the old order—the military, the Catholic Church and the industrialists who embraced Franco for almost four decades. Last November, 400,000 of the "old guard" attended a Madrid rally to pay homage to the late dictator and denounce "the dismemberment of our nation," by which they meant granting autonomy to the Basques, Catalonians and Andalusians. Speakers also excoriated what they called "other evidences of democracy": abortion, divorce and pornography.

It was not the first such mass rally in recent months. In April, for instance, Piñar's rightists staged a special mass honoring Hitler's ninetieth birthday despite a church ban on the event. In May,

on Spanish Homeland Day, 200,000 blue-shirted Falange marchers paraded down Madrid's broad, beautiful boulevards past pro-Falange, neo-Nazi and anti-Jewish signs and banners.

Spain's Jews know full well that their status depends on the outcome of this tug of war. The 10-12,000-member organized Jewish community, mainly emigrants from Spanish Morocco, together with 10-15,000 unaffiliated newcomers, political exiles from Chile and Argentina, have the proverbial two passports in their pockets and are ready to flee again at a moment's notice

Nevertheless no one considers the right capable of overturning Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez' centrist government. The argument often advanced for this optimistic view is that the coming of democracy has irrevocably changed the texture of Spanish life, despite the warped sentiments openly expressed in the streets. "The swastikas," explained José Luis Zavola Richie, Minister of Tourism, "are aimed at Spanish democracy, not Jews."

"You'll see democracy every day on our newsstands" said one newspaperman proudly. And indeed publications of every political hue are now on sale, in sharp contrast to the Franco years. El

País, the well-edited and thoughtful liberal daily founded in 1976 is thriving alongside its older, conservative rival, A.B.C.

There is an air of prosperity in Madrid but in the South, where seething poverty and joblessness are common, communists of varying shades have been elected to local offices and the safety valve of

emigration has been virtually shut down. Both Spanish and European industry as a whole have been feeling the restrictive effects of the energy crunch.

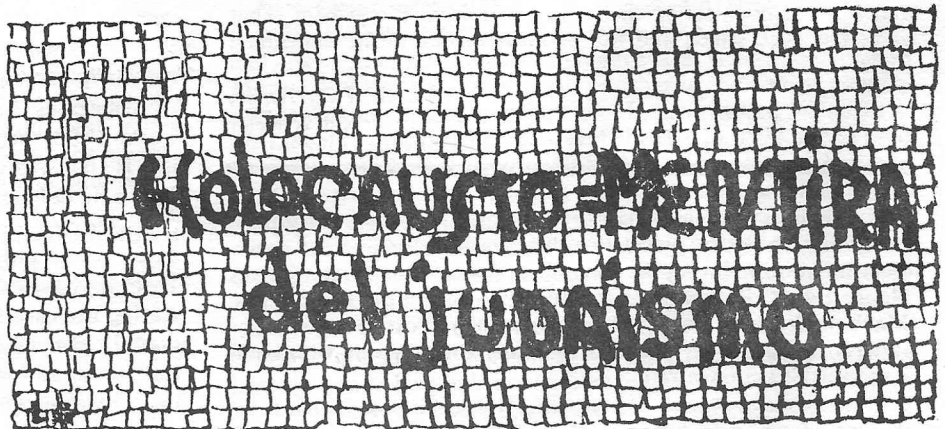
Thanks to Suárez (once Franco's obscure General Director of Spanish Television and Governor of Segovia) and King Juan Carlos, the army has thus far remained loyal to the constitutional monarchy. But some military leaders are plainly unhappy about the present regime.

..... However, the Church has refused to turn against the monarchy and tilt toward the Falange.

Actually only isolated events bring out the ultra-rightists' fury. One was the television performance last May of "Holocaust," which Spanish tourist officials claim led to the spate of swastikas and such graffiti as "Holocausto—Mentira del Judaismo" (The Holocaust is a Jewish Lie) and "Free Rudolph Hess." And when 300 women staged a sit-in at the Palace of Justice to protest the trial of two women accused of conducting abortions, baton-wielding civil guardsmen charged them, shouting, according to press accounts: "Whores—Go and abort outside." The Suárez government was embarrassed by the assault and was bitterly attacked in the Cortes (Parliament) by Socialists and Communists; the right chortled with glee at its discomfort.

Clearly, Spain's Jews prefer avoiding politics—but politics has a way of finding them. For example, sporadic anti-Semitic outbursts by neo-Nazis, such as the bombing of the Madrid and Barcelona synagogues in 1976 and recent attacks on Jewish-owned shops, could not be ignored.

Cont. page 8



Buffalonian Wants Place in History For His Hero: Paul Robeson

By PAUL BATT

In his 67 years as a soldier, union organizer, merchant seaman and now graduate student, Jacob A. "Jake" Kramer has met many special persons, but none more so than Vincent Ossowski and the late black actor-singer Paul Robeson.

The Buffalo native first encountered the two men in December 1937 inside a convent-turned-battlefield hospital in the mountains of Spain. The Spanish Civil War was ablaze all around.

Mr. Kramer and Mr. Ossowski were there as volunteers in the now-famous Abraham Lincoln Brigade, fighting the nationalist armies of Generalissimo Francisco Franco. Mr. Robeson was touring Republican-held areas singing and performing for the troops.

* * *

AS MR. KRAMER recalled during an interview Saturday in his Amherst home, he lay stricken with colitis "in a little room way way up in the convent all by myself." Seven hard months of transporting wounded men and supplies had taken their toll.

"Suddenly Robeson came up and visited me. He asked what he could do. I asked him to sing 'Peat-Bog Soldier' (a favorite tune to anti-fascists of the time). He sang it so powerfully it got me out of bed."

Vince Ossowski also met and was awestruck by Mr. Robeson that day, and their common reverence for the controversial American will prompt them to meet Tuesday evening at State University of Buffalo for a Paul Robeson Memorial Meeting.

Mr. Kramer and Mr. Ossowski went their separate ways after their experiences in the battlefield hospital. Mr. Kramer never saw his old friend again, although he heard of his exploits in World War II. Apparently, Mr. Ossowski was part of an OSS team that softened up the Salerno beachhead for Allied landing craft in 1943.

* * *

"HE'S A REAL hero," boasted Mr. Kramer. "He organized the native population and save a lot of Allied lives."

Mr. Kramer and Mr. Ossowski will reminisce about their Spanish Civil War days and update each other on the subsequent 43 years at 4 p.m. Tuesday at the Ponderosa Steak House on Main Street. A number of UB professors and other persons will share their reunion.



MEMORIES — Jacob A. Kramer looks over some of the memorabilia from his experiences going back to the Spanish Civil War 43 years ago.

From dinner, the group will move to Room 233 of Squire Hall on UB's Main Street Campus for the Robeson event. The group will listen to the singer's legendary voice, watch him in a movie called "Tallest Tree" and then listen to Mr. Kramer relate why his hero has been shortchanged in American history.

The man Time Magazine called a "genuine tragic hero" enchanted world concert audiences with his rich bass voice, but shocked Americans with his close ties to the Soviet Union.

* * *

THE ACTOR was an All-American football player at Rutgers University, earned a law degree from Columbia University, and showed his dramatic talents in the plays "Emperor Jones" and "Othello," and the musical "Showboat."

But the same man was awarded the Stalin Peace Prize in 1952 and sent his only son, Paul Jr., to school in Moscow

with the dictator's daughter. He died in 1976.

Mr. Kramer believes Mr. Robeson's love for the Soviet Union should not cloud his achievements in other areas. "He's a great American, but his name has been vilified in America. His name has been practically wiped from history books . . . I want to rectify a great wrong that's being perpetuated," he said.

Mr. Kramer knows the odds are against him. He knows of no other Robeson memorial group in the country.

But the man who grew up in what he calls "Buffalo's East Side Jewish ghetto" has made a life of longshots.

* * *

DURING WORLD WAR II, Mr. Kramer was in the crew of a U.S. merchant vessel sunk by a U-boat torpedo attack off Panama. Crewmen floated three days in the Caribbean before rescue.

Throat cancer struck in 1960. Mr. Kramer underwent a laryn-

gectomy at Roswell Park Memorial Institute. His voice box removed, he is speaking by expelling air through a surgical opening in his throat.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Millard Fillmore College in 1978 and currently has finished course work on a master's degree in the social sciences.

Besides daily classes, Mr. Kramer spends time working on the UB newspaper "The Other One" and with the area Gray Panthers chapter.

That is, when he's not regaling younger students with stories about harrowing truck rides between Valencia and Madrid, or his union organizing days, or his friendships with Paul Robeson and Vince Ossowski.

THE BUFFALO NEWS

Sunday, February 17, 1980

YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT !!

(With Philosophic Humility, Detachment and Apology)

John R. Gerlach

For years I've had this recurring nightmare — in technicolor — that the Spanish people would, some day, liberate themselves without my advice and help. Well, finally it happened. I've been a political mess ever since. I know they did it. But, did they do it the right way?!

I've visited Spain several times. Sheer nostalgia — in search of places, people, long fought battles and glory.

I get together with other Vets. We reminisce of Jarama, Madrid, La Canada, Belchite, Hill 666. Those were the days; our youth, our moment, our glory. What else would we talk about? I drag my wife into it and she beams indulgently; sort-of-proud-of-her-man. Occasionally she complains: "Don't you have something else but Belchite to talk about?" "I've been hearing this for years." I don't blame her. It does get a bit boring. Of course, she does not understand she married a legend. With so many important things on my mind I have to worry about her.

The other night I was making this important report on my latest visit to Spain. I like making reports. Nay I insisted. I had to put up a fight. Some Vets were dead set against it. Class struggle goes on in various forms and in many places.

It took me some ten minutes to warm up and get to, finally, Madrid. One Vet was snoring, the others were shifting in their chairs from left to right — no pun intended — rolling their tired eyes heavenward. There was not much substance even less sense to my report. But, you understand, it was my deep concern for the Spanish people, and the understanding of historical importance

REPORT FROM MADRID

To its credit the Jewish community reacted with uncharacteristic vigor. Its leaders publicly protested to the Madrid Civil Governor and other officials; they joined with the Catholic Church and the Protestant Center Interdenominational body to denounce the attacks. Recently they overtly supported the government's proposed new Law on Religious Liberty, which accords Jews the same privileges granted other religious groups—an astonishing development when one recalls that as recently as 1967 synagogues were forbidden to publicly identify themselves.

These activities are related to Jews' rights as Spanish citizens. An entirely new element was introduced last September when P.L.O. leader Yasir Arafat unexpectedly flew to Spain, fresh from his triumph at the Havana summit meeting of unaligned nations.

..... Arafat was heady indeed. Above all, he told the press, he wanted a joint communique with the government indicating some form of official recognition.

Suárez and Foreign Minister Marcelino Oreja shrank from any such measure. "It is not an official visit," complained an anonymous Spanish official to reporters. In the end, however, a communique was issued amid reports that more than ever Spain was wholly dependent on Arab oil.

Mauricio Hatchwell Toledano, the

Jewish community's leader, was taken aback when Tom Burns of the *Washington Post* phoned for an interview about Arafat's arrival. Hatchwell soon learned that neither Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan—then in Munich—nor the Israeli intelligence services had any knowledge of Arafat's whereabouts.

..... In October, a Tel Aviv dance company performed to rave reviews in Barcelona. Madrid hosted a meeting of the European Council of Jewish Communities—the umbrella group of Jewish organizations on the continent—in November. Even in Toledo, the stronghold of Piñar's ultra-rightists and neo-Nazis, a tree-planting ceremony was held in October celebrating ties between Toledo and Spanish Jewry and marking "The Friendship of the Spanish and Israeli Peoples."

Even so, unknown to the Spanish Jewish community another storm was brewing. Without consulting them, the Council of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations in the United States voiced its chagrin at the reception given Arafat in Madrid, and announced it was urging a "reexamining" of tours to Spain by American Jewish organizations—in essence, a boycott.

Nor were Spanish Jews aware that Theodore R. Mann, president of the Conference had talked with Spain's Foreign Minister Oreja in New York City. In late September the *New York Times'*

I must say my wife bore stoically and proudly through all this. A half smile adorned her lips and sort of caressed her face. I could not take my eyes off her. Then I realized it was not pride registered on her face but resigned indulgence, tolerant of my senility. She suffered and rejoiced with me all these years. Would she abandon me now — her hero?

During all this Butch kept intoning: "Bullshit! Fuck you!" While another disruptor insisted on equal time. I conducted myself with dignity somewhat oblivious to these insults. The Chairman had to admonish the disruptors several times and order the Secretary to strike some of this stuff from the record. For the sake of unity, he explained.

The little women — our wives — sat through all this shaking their heads in disbelief. However, they contained themselves — bless them — knowing this is the boys night out for fun and good time.

That night I couldn't fall asleep, for a long long time, tossing and turning. Got up, the little woman was fast asleep. Tried talking to Screw Ball — our dog. He opened his sad eyes, looked at me and moved away. Finally fell asleep.

Would you know it. Had a nightmare. I was campaigning for the Dellums Bill. But, that's another story.

To be continued.

Professor A. Prago will be conducting a one-week seminar on the Spanish Civil War for Senior Citizens in Residence. This course will be given this summer at Bard College, Annendale-on-Hudson.

United Nations correspondent, Bernard D. Nossiter reported that Mann "walked out of a private meeting with the Spanish Foreign Minister . . . when he was told that Spain would recognize Israel but it could take four years." Nossiter also wrote that Oreja expressed surprise "at the intensity of feeling [meaning Jewish feeling, of course] over Madrid's welcome of Yasir Arafat." On his side, Mann confessed "he was not aware that Madrid had, since the end of World War II, tried to break out of its isolation by establishing ties with Arab nations."

When word of the Mann-Oreja meeting and the proposed boycott reached Hatchwell, he objected strongly to the Americans' strategy. Spain's Jews had not been consulted, he stated; the maneuver was stupid. Rabbi Baruj (Baruch) Garon Serfaty, executive director of the Spanish Sephardic Federation and former rabbi of Madrid's synagogue, was even angrier. "Politics among Jews must be handled with great morality. It is only moral and just that if a decision is to be made which affects a particular party, then that party should be consulted. The party in this case is the Spanish Jewish community, and it is we who will be hurt by the boycott, not the Spanish Government."

The impact of Arafat's visit and the talk of boycott will pass. A far more important question is whether democracy survives and flourishes in Spain.

Murray Polner recently visited Spain on a tour for ~~Jewish~~ journalists sponsored by the Spanish National Tourist Office.

CRACKER BARREL

Oaxaco, Mex. 12/28/79

Dear Friends,

With great affection I am sending from this city in the South of Mexico my fraternal greetings, accompanied with my desire that 1980 should be a year of health and prosperity for all of you.

A few days ago I received the interesting publication called "The volunteer," organ of the ex-combatants of The Lincoln Brigade in Spain and I was very pleased with it. But there is a doubt in my mind whether some of you know me, or whether you sent me The Volunteer because my name was given you by comrades from the States who live in Cuernavaca, Mexico.

In any case, I thank you for this splendid Christmas present and I want to explain that I am a veteran of the war in Spain, the same as you. I fought the whole war in diverse battalions of the 13th Int. Brigade "Dombrowsky" reaching the grade of captain after the battle of the Ebro. I suffered three wounds during the war and was decorated three times by the Popular Republic of Poland. I live in this city of Oaxaca and am a newspaperman and have written a book of my memoirs. I had in the Lincoln Brigade many friends; among them the Mexicans who fought together with you, such as Antonio Pujol, Manuel Valenzuela, Bernabe Barrios "Pancho", Migoni, Jose Jaramillo Rojas (died in combat), Juan Razo, Talavera and others. Several friends who are veterans live in Cuernavaca such as William Miller, Frederika, Line de Vries and others.

Would you please send me other copies of "The Volunteer" and now you know that here you have a friend and that I would like us to continue our correspondence by mail. If at any time any of you come to Oaxaca, you will always find me here.

A warm embrace for all,

Nestor Sanchez H.

Dear Comrades:

Thanks for sending me the last issue of the Volunteer (Vol. 2 No. 3, 1979). Please keep it coming as I haven't been receiving any.

I like the format and the content and enclose \$15.00—not much money but with much love.

I agree with Manny Harriman—the archives now held by the CPUSA belong to the VALB.

Salud

Irving W. Rappoport

Dear Manny:

Notice you got in a preliminary note on Baumann's book in the last issue from Alvah. Am enclosing a more extensive review of Baumann's work, which merits much broader attention in the U.S. (The book, not the review.)

There is one caveat: the price is not yet firm and is being negotiated with the Peruvian Distributor now. \$4 will include shipping and handling charges. I shall let you know as soon as I hear from them, hopefully within two weeks.

Congratulations on the last issue. It seems each issue is getting better and larger. Keep it up. Heard you were ill. Do hope you have recovered completely, and do want to wish you a great 1980.

Salud y suerte,

Carl Geiser

P.S. — Don't know whether I can go along with you on the archives. A lot of people have some claim to the XVth Brigade Archives, including the Canadians and the British. I suspect that in the end the proper place for them may be in Spain when it truly has a people's government. To me, the important thing is access to them, and to make sure they are not destroyed. Have just had a sad experience. The British Foreign Office General Correspondence is made public after 30 years and the index they issued named several dozen documents involving us in Franco Spain, including names, conditions, executions, reports by individuals who visited us etc. Have just learned that the first ten I wanted out of a list of 19, named in order of importance, have been destroyed. It looks as if some one went thru them and destroyed those which placed Franco in a bad light. I understand some progress is being made in providing for access to the archives.

Dear Manny:

Better late than never. Thanks for the letters of November 4 and February 2. I envy you the trip to Cuba. Would have liked to go with you and shared those old Harlem contacts. And I'm glad to hear that "on the whole (you are) in good shape".

Time sure does fly. You have now put out seven issues of the Volunteer. I heartily approve of your stewardship. Like everything else, we all have to serve an apprenticeship in jobs we undertake and the last two years have been an important learning experience for you. Even if the spelling continues bad, I think there are important technical improvements. More important, you are learning how to be a more polished and assertive writer.

As to content. I think your job is more difficult than your predecessors because the central task of VALB was achieved in October 1975. That is the removal of Franco. I think that is why we have floundered since then and the baling wire and scotch tape that held us together could no longer contain old and ancient tensions.

Nevertheless, we are now a part of history. We want the credits. We want to remind people of it as we defend it. So we want our records preserved. We want recognition (Dellums). We want our medals polished. We want our ailing comrades taken care of and we want to tend the graves and write the obits.

That's no small jobs. And the Volunteer — more even than the organizational structure of VALB—must fill that bill. That's what I get from the seven issues you have edited.

Some of us have other agendas which have no place in VALB or the VOLUNTEER and so, when we can't impose them, we act unruly, discourteous and contentious and put on temper tantrums.

It might be well if you took the initiative to suggest some rules of civil behavior as a guide to how the Volunteer would best reflect the needs of this unique group of vanishing Americans.

This should be based—not on the principle of unity (which has lost its meaning)—on where and what we are today. And this in fact we will remain a visible and interesting part of America as long as there is one vet. We reflect the wide spectrum of American political thought and yet we shared a special and distinct experience which forged our common bond.

We have to agree to respect each other as we also agree to disagree. Therefore, the editor will insist on civility* from *all* who submit any item.

I am submitting a batch of materials I got on the new play Mac-Pap's. I think the next issue might say something about it. Use them as you see fit and then *return* them to me. I need them,

Warmly,

Saully Wellman

*CIVILITY — observance of the accepted forms of social behavior or adequate perfunctory politeness. Decent behavior or treatment.

Dear Friends:

Enclosed is a \$10.00 bill to support the Volunteer.

I would also like to call the attention of the Vets who will set up the next issue that there is an important error at the bottom of page 4, Issues 1979, Vol. 2, No. 4, right column pertaining to the Gina Medem material about the Civil War in Spain, which I translated, mention of which was made in the previous Volunteer in the Report by the Historical Commission. I could not have said that Gina Medem will have a statement in the following issue. She has been dead for several years now. What I said over the phone was the statement in the next issue will be mine—the translator's for the purpose of explaining to the Vets and those interested about the substance of the material I translated.

By the way, the current issue is very informative, interesting and stimulating. Volunteer, you have come alive.

Salud,

Sylvia Acker

P.S. Please see that the erroneous statement about Gina Medem is *corrected*; it is very embarrassing to me.

Ed. Note — sorry we got the information wrong over the phone.

POST REPORTS

SAN FRANCISCO

Following our anniversary dinner, a meeting of West Coast vets took place on February 3rd at the Wolffs. Some 50 people were in attendance including vets from L.A., San Diego, Seattle and the Bay Area; among them Steve Nelson, National Commander and as a guest, Tom Entwistle, who many of you remember from recent visits to Spain. Tom gave a brief talk on the Homenaje to the IB's planned by a group in Madrid proposing the restoration of the monument to the IB dead in the French cemetery around May 6th.

Jack Withers asked the group that VALB officially present a gift of a carved wood crucifixion and a 260 year old bible to the city of Guernica in memory of the religiosos who resisted Fascism. It was unanimously endorsed with recommendation that it be channeled through the National Office.

Milt Wolff gave a report on VRC. The effort to complete the White Paper which makes the case for granting us WWII veterans status is not yet complete but efforts to get the necessary documentation continue. It was pointed out that the bill by Congressman Dellums which in the previous session was designated HR 12684, and in this session HR 259—is coming closer to a hearing. In answer to some questions Wolff said that though the chances of passage of this Bill may be remote the campaign itself is of utmost importance "for it provides us with the means of asserting our claim of having volunteered "prematurely" in our country's cause in the war against fascism, that started in Madrid with the invasion of the Condor Legion and Italian fascist divisions and ended with Mussolini hanging by his heels and Hitler—a pile of ashes in a bunker in Berlin." It is vital to keep this concept in the fore so as to place both the Vets and Spain in the proper perspective. No doubt that we will win support from important persons in American life. A petition addressed to the Chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee was circulated at our dinner and garnered over 600 signatures.

A lively discussion took place on the Volunteer. The remarks were both, complimentary and critical. The general consensus was the Volunteer is a publication that should reflect more the work of the Posts and opinions of Vets. The Posts were urged to send in more material and that the articles be kept at a reasonable length because of limited space in the paper.

Steve Nelson contributed to the discussion by pointing out that the Dinner in the Bay Area points to the possibilities of broadening our VALB work and that such activity helps to overcome the squabbles that exist in the organization.

ADMINISTRATION COMM. EXTRACTS:

Motion was made and passed unanimously that Oscar Hunter, as Secretary of VALB, be the keeper of the archives. A motion was made and passed unanimously that a letter defining the attitude of VALB towards the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives be sent to our membership and friends, so as to make clear to them our position and our support of its work. With regard to the requests that have been received from La Comision de Homenaje a las Brigadas Internacionales, the decision was made that the VALB as an organization will not participate in the proposed ceremony, nor in the setting up of a plaque. Given the delicate political situation in Spain, such participation can be used by the right as an instrument of provocation. Every individual vet is, of course, free to use his own judgment as to whether or not he wants to participate.

It was decided that a National Board meeting be held in New York, Wed. and Thurs., April 9th and 10th, 1980, beginning at 9:30 A.M.

Items suggested for the agenda were: ALBA; VRC; the archives; The Volunteer; the Spanish situation and political prisoners; organisational questions, including the proposals regarding a constitution; book projects, including the histories by Carl Geiser and Jimmy Yates; the FBI, HUAC, and SACB files; Good and Welfare.

CLEVELAND

Dear Manny:

Thank you for the bundle you sent me of the last issue. This is the only method we have of keeping in contact with some of the people

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Dear Irv:

My best regards to all the comrades at the meeting. Here's a brief report on the Speaker's Bureau activities. When you report this, I'll be sunning myself on a Puerto Rican beach under a blue sky. I'll even be thinking of you. This is our first vacation in a long while and I like to think we deserve it.

You might make mention of the following. Our speaker's kit is pretty much set up. We have our bibliography and I think it is one of the best on the SCW for books in English. Eventually it will be further annotated, indicating paperbacks, whether out of print, and adding new titles (there are already 3 or 4 books published since our compilation) and perhaps we'll add an asterisk for the books we think most important. At that time, we may throw some sort of a cover on it and get it into all major libraries, colleges and trade unions.

You have a copy of our first test letter (380) to colleges and universities which hit political science and history departments as well as the chairperson of student government. We will watch those results carefully. As of now, we are in the process of setting up speaking dates at 3 universities and have nibbles from a few trade unions. More about that when it happens.

We will have the Hemingway tape available for our speakers. His comments, needless to say, are very effective, very dramatic... should go over big on campus. Also, we will soon have some music on tape. This is to come from Saul Shapiro in Mexico who has a good collection of SCW and VALB music. Excellent for background, etc. When we arrange each engagement we will also offer a list of films which may be rented as part of the program. Our good friend, John Gerassi, used them at Bard and together with our speakers, it was heavy artillery.

I want to thank the members of the Speaker's Bureau for helping to set this up. My perspective is for all the comrades to participate in these programs. Each of us have something unique... our individual experiences, impressions and reactions and this is extremely important to our audiences. It is history that won't be lost.

Salud, Maury Calow

\$20,000 GRANT FOR LINCOLN FILM

I hope it is not too late to print the good news that the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Film Project has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities of \$10,000 to develop a proposal for production funds and another \$10,000 to get the filming under way.

The documentary will interweave interview of veterans with newsreel footage, photographs, music, poems, songs, etc. to tell the Lincolns' saga from the climate which produced the anti-fascist movement in America through the Lincolns' experiences in the McCarthy era. Underlying social issues will be examined by veterans with diverse points of view.

Substantial funds will not be available until the fall. Unfortunately, the money we have will not cover all the filming that must be done before then: the commemoration at CCNY, the homage to the International Brigades in Spain, and interviews with veterans in declining health. We are sending out an appeal for tax-deductible contributions, and we would like to ask all veterans and their families to keep us informed about veterans in ill-health so that we can establish our priorities.

For a prospectus on the film, contact Sam Sills, 782 West End Ave. #83, New York, N.Y. 10025.

in Ohio who have helped and worked with us in the past through the Cleveland Committee for a Democratic Spain. This committee has ceased to exist some two years ago.

In discussing this with the friends who have given us the most active support of the work of this committee, it was agreed that we should send to the Volunteer the balance in our small treasury. Therefore, enclosed is our check of \$57.00 which we hope will contribute to your ability to continue issuing the paper. We hope we can continue receiving future bundles.

Morris Stamm

NATIONAL ISSUES VOTE

Motion A

"In pursuance of our responsibility to strengthen and deepen our history, we request access to the archives of the CPUSA which relate to the American Volunteers who fought in Spain."

In favor 112

Opposed 30

Motion B.

"VALB reaffirms its solidarity with the Botwin veterans.

In favor 115

Opposed 30

Item I. Structure of VALB: Proposed officers: Precise functions of Secretary and Recording Secretary would be defined by incoming National Board. 89 yes 3 no.

Item II. Basis for election National Board: From each Post, 1 National Board member for every 25 members or major fraction thereof. 90 yes 5 no.

Item III. All National Board members elected from New York Post are voting members of the Administrative Committee. 83 yes 10 no.

Item IV. Modification of procedure adopted in 1977 to deal with matters not covered by VALB policy. 80 yes 12 no.

Total Vote Cast 156

Total Ballots sent out 327

Void 4

Morris Brier

PLEASE DONATE TO THE VOLUNTEER

Money — I do not want to belabor a point or make a big deal of it. The flow of contributions have not reached the cost of the Volunteer. Please do not delay. Write that check now.

Fredricka Martin	10.00
Sid Kaufman	10.00
Morris Mennell	10.00
Esther Sheehan	\$20.00
Irving Rappaport	15.00
Cleveland Comm. for Democratic Spain	57.00
Harris	1.00
Sonya and John Gerlach	10.00
From a Vet	25.00
Sylvia Acker	10.00
Al Emery	5.00
Herb Taba	25.00
Sol & Esther Newman	25.00
Joe Zawadowski	10.00
Frank and Helen Cherko	20.00
Anonomously	10.00

Ed. Note — correct last issue. It is not Vol. 2 # 2 but Vol. 2 #4. Change your copy.

MORE ABOUT GINA MEDEM

Late in 1938 Ms. Medem addressed the "Jewish-Spanish Aid Committee" in Paris. As reported in the January 1939 issue (the only one) of the Bulletin of that Committee, Gina Medem referred to the formation of aid committees for the Botwin unit in Amsterdam, London, Buenos Aires, Paris and elsewhere. She appealed for help from American Jews saying "The American Jews helped the Lincoln Brigade. However they have to help us, the Jews. The only country where there is no specific help to the Botwin unit is America." (Translated from the Yiddish)

One must wonder why nothing was done in the U.S., especially in view of the fact that such a large percentage (about 30%) of the Lincolns were Jews.

WRITING FOR THE VOLUNTEER

This is now the eighth issue of the Volunteer since I first became editor. At that time I indicated a new membership participating Volunteer and began the "Cracker Barrel" plus opening up the Volunteer to more submissions from the Vets themselves. This was done in order to give more voice to those Vets who lived where there were no posts or to those Vets who could not go to meetings due to age, infirmity or whatever. They could still participate through the Volunteer. It was Jerry Cook, the last editor of the Volunteer in the last issue who opened up this new approach of publishing more points of view such as the Botwins and I continued and expanded his excellent concepts. The results are now that material is being submitted by Vets who kept it bottled up for a long time. Good stuff, interesting. To use it all, if we had money, we would need a larger Volunteer.

Well now, since we only have 12 pages, some rules have got to be established so we can get it all in.

1. All material submitted has to be *typed, double spaced*. Edit it yourself by tightening up, etc. We do have a limited typist for those vets who can't. So submit but try to get it typed.

2. Subject matter restricted to VALB history, problems, activities, business, though friendly greetings or chit chat will always be welcome.

3. All columns, articles, must conform to national board policy except in two view discussion articles, pre national board or pre conference discussions. The only exception is the Cracker Barrel where veterans views are their own—no censorship if under these rules.

4. Editing is necessary to conform to space limitations and literary continuity. If you don't want your article edited, say so and it will be sent back to you with editing suggestions, for you to edit. Please enclose stamped envelope.

5. Length of material:

a. Post Reports, Activities, 650 words.

b. Organizational activities, dinners, special activities, Spain articles, convention program reports—2000 words or two pages.

c. Cracker Barrel — 250 words to 350 words.

d. All material submitted by vets will be kept to fit into subsequent issues. Material about men who died, especially invited. Send in your stories, Spain or battle activities, incidents, recollections of other vets names of vets.

Memoriams: Two pages have been set aside for Memoriams. No vet who dies should be missed. The post has the responsibility to send obits. Please submit obits to them. Obits of vets who died in Spain and past years are especially requested. 350 words minimum and picture. Maximum 750 words with picture.

"As of the moment of our approximately 350 members, less than a hundred or so attend meetings and even those do not attend regularly. The remaining 250 are scattered around the country and have no way of making their views known to their fellow vets. In essence, a majority of our membership has no access whatsoever in any meaningful participation in VALB affairs. *They will now have that access.*" This was written at the initiation of the Cracker Barrel and to an extent subsequent issues have shown that the Vets like this type of outlet. Now use the rest of the Volunteer by submitting material to this — your Volunteer.

DEADLINE NEXT ISSUE JUNE 1

Note: R. Cooper, Commander VALB Florida Post died last year Still waiting for the obit from post.

Anton Harbin, a devoted active anti-facist until his last moments, passed away Friday, December 14th, 1979. Born December 9, 1906.

NMU retiree skilled at macrame

Ladislaus Ferdinand Szeliga may sound like a very intriguing and complex name to some. It's the real monicker of NMU retiree Stanley Postek, who changed his name from Szeliga to Postek when he began boxing in New Orleans in the thirties. Postek has received high acclaim as the ancient mariner on the high fashion scene. He is currently the owner of the Rope Gallery in New York City and is known by the name "Mr. Macramé."

Having joined the International Seamen's Union in Houston, Texas, Postek worked with the rank and file to help organize the NMU (which he joined in 1937). After sailing for some 35 years, he retired in 1967 and in the past 12 years has developed an approach to the art of macramé that is both old and new and totally unique from anything ever done before.

Among Postek's many credits are the nautical decor at "Trader Vic's" and "Marriott's Essex House," macramé costumes for "Camino Real" and "Two Gentlemen of Verona," 50 plant hangers displayed in the windows at Lord and Taylor, and unique designs featured in *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Women's Wear Daily*, and on the cover of *Cosmopolitan*.

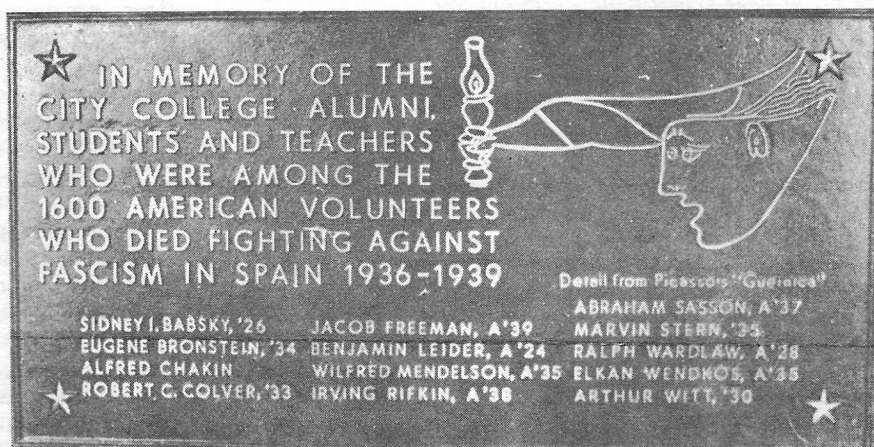
In addition to his successful macramé creations, the talented Postek won the 175 lb. Golden Gloves title in 1937 in San Francisco, is a member of the Screen Actors Guild (having appeared in "On the Waterfront" with Marlon Brando as a waterfront goon) and has taught courses on the art of macramé at New York University.

One of the founding fathers of NMU, Postek would now like to offer his shop as a rehabilitation center for the NMU P&W Alcoholism Program and as an additional learning experience to NMU students enrolled at the Upgrading and Retraining School, when time permits.



Stanley Postek poses for PILOT amid some of his works in Greenwich Village shop
Ed. Note: All this plus fighting in the Spanish Civil War.

Memorial Plaque in City College



Memorial Meeting

New York City College
Volunteers-in-Spain

Lincoln Corridor, Shepard Hall, Convent Avenue & 138th Street
Sunday, 2 P.M., April 13th, 1980

THE VOLUNTEER
3650 EMERALD, APT. E4
TORRANCE, CAL 90503

FIRST CLASS MAIL