

BOOK NEWS OF THE WEEK

BOOK MARKS

Lower-Priced Books May Result From New Process Used in Printing 'For Whom the Bell Tolls'

By BEN BURNS

Much as you try, there seems to be no escaping talk of Ernest Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls" these days.

First and perhaps most important is the news that the new printing process used on the "Bell" may soon mean cut prices on books. Slashing costs drastically is the use of web-fed high-speed presses printing books entirely from rubber plates.

The new method was used to run off 200,000 copies of the "Bell" for the Book-of-the-Month Club. This was the largest first printing of any book in recent years and had to be fast. Saved in the new process was 25 per cent in ink consumption and 66 per cent reduction in make-ready time.

New lows in book prices are seen coming immediately as a result. Reprints of best sellers of a few months back are being run off on the new presses and will retail at \$1.29. Textbooks also will be run off by the method to save costs.

Second is the news that Hemingway's book has now been sold to 310,000 customers, some kind of a new mark.

The Critics Have Their Say

And finally is the story that Y. Frank Freeman of Paramount, which bought the book for the movies, will poll 150 leading book critics in the nation for their casting suggestions.

Mostly it sounds like a publicity stunt, but it may provoke some discussion at any rate. Suggestions to date for the part of Robert Jordan include Gary Cooper and Clark Gable. Personally I'll take Henry Fonda. For Maria, Paulette Goddard has been suggested. And Hemingway himself is supposed to have suggested the famous photographer, Frank Capra, for the role of Raphael, the gypsy.

Incidentally Hemingway is supposed to be in on the writing of the screen play, which should help call a halt of Hollywood's intentions to make the "Bell" purely love hokum. But it won't help in cutting the phony politics in some parts of the book, described very tellingly on this page today by the Veterans of the Lincoln Brigade.

An Open Letter to Hemingway From the Lincoln Brigade Vets

Nov. 23, 1940.

Literary Editor,
The People's World,
Dear Sir:

At a recent membership meeting of the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, Mr. Hemingway's latest work, "For Whom the Bell Tolls" was a topic for considered judgment. Our interest in "For Whom the Bell Tolls" is not incidental. It concerns us especially, inasmuch as the men in our organization went through the experiences and hardships of the Spanish struggle. These men, who fought side by side with the Spanish people, understood and realized their deep aspirations for democracy and freedom.

We earnestly believe that the following resolution which was thoroughly discussed, argued and finally passed at our meeting, would be of particular interest and value to your readers.

Your careful consideration of the enclosed resolution will be appreciated by us.

Yours sincerely,

MILTON WOLFE

National Commander;

FRED P. KELLER, JR.,

NY Post Commander;

IRVING GOFF

Acting Secy.-Treasurer.

Dear Mr. Hemingway: As men who fought in the International Brigades of the Spanish Republican Army, convinced of the rightness of that cause and ready to give our lives in its service, we deeply resent and condemn the picture of that cause

which you have portrayed in your novel, "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

It is our considered opinion that, far from writing "truly" of that war, as your hero Robert Jordan so frequently desired to do, what emerges from your book is a picture so drastically mutilated and distorted (by errors of both omission and commission) as to slander the cause for which we fought, which the great majority of the democratic people of the world supported, and which you yourself honorably sustained both by your writing and by your personal action.

We could, if necessary, particularize this charge endlessly, but at this time we wish merely to call your attention to the following indisputable facts:

Qualified Praise

1.—Every tribute you gratuitously handed the Spanish people, the Communists, the Soviet Union, or the International Brigades is totally vitiated by a counter-statement which bears such heavy emphasis as to constitute the reader's main and final impression. For example: any true impression of the full horror of Franco's known policy of atrocity (though it is stated) is completely blunted by your vivid and lengthy description of an isolated example of anarchist excess.

2.—Through one or another of your characters you have maligned Dolores Ibarruri (La Pasionaria), Lister, and El Campesino, and thus attempted to discredit the most competent and beloved leaders of the Spanish people and their army.

3.—The leading representative of the Soviet Union portrayed in your book (Karkov) is a thorough cynical and unprincipled character

Thus the entire attitude of the Soviet Union toward Spain is distorted and villified, and its magnificent diplomatic and material support—food, clothing, tanks and planes, the very weapons we fought with—is overshadowed and almost ignored.

A Great Leader Slandered

4.—You have irresponsibly slandered, under his own name, the man who was the organizer and the spirit of the International Brigades—Andre Marty. Marty's long record as a revolutionary and a fighter for the international working class cannot be impeached by whatever your personal opinion of him may be. His contribution to the fight in Spain was solid and world-respected, and your attempt to indict him as "a fool" and "a murderer" cannot bear examination by the facts.

The Marty we served under was the acknowledged organizer and leader of those Brigades whose brilliant record and tradition belong to history, those Brigades which you yourself have zealously and frequently championed.

The real Marty formulated the policy which guided the International Brigades throughout the war and neither that policy nor initiator can be impugned by an unprincipled attack—analytical to that made by the Fascists, against what was the betrayal Andre Marty, foremost spokesman of the Fre-