

# The United States and World Fascism: Human Rights from the Spanish Civil War to Nuremberg and Beyond

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE ARCHIVES



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**Canute Frankson**, a Jamaican-born mechanic, left his home in Detroit to join the fight against fascism in Spain in April of 1937. Several months after arriving, he wrote a powerful letter to a “dear friend” back home, one in which he tries to explain and justify his decision to go fight in Spain in a “war between whites who for centuries have held us in slavery.”

Here is that letter...

Albacete, Spain  
July 6, 1937

My Dear Friend:

I’m sure that by this time you are still waiting for a detailed explanation of what has this international struggle to do with my being here. Since this is a war between whites who for centuries have held us in slavery, and have heaped every kind of insult and abuse upon us, segregated and jim-crowed us; why I, a Negro, who have fought through these years for the rights of my people am here in Spain today.

Because we are no longer an isolated minority group fighting hopelessly against an immense giant, because, my dear, we have joined with, and become an active part of, a great progressive force, on whose shoulders rests the responsibility of saving human civilization from the planned destruction of a small group of degenerates gone mad in their lust for power. Because if we crush Fascism here, we’ll save our people in America, and in other parts of the world, from the vicious prosecution, wholesale imprisonment, and slaughter which the Jewish people suffered and are suffering under Hitler’s Fascist heels.

All we have to do is to think of the lynching of our people. We can but look back at the pages of American history stained with the blood of Negroes, stink with the burning bodies of our people hanging from trees; bitter with the groans of our tortured loved ones from whose living bodies, ears, fingers, toes, have been cut for souvenirs — living bodies into which red-hot pokers have been thrust. All because of a hate created in the minds of men and women by their masters who keep us all under their heels while they such our blood, while they live in their bed of ease by exploiting us.

But these people who howl like hungry wolves for our blood, must we hate them? Must we keep the flame which these mastered kindled constantly fed? Are these men and women responsible for the programs of their masters, and the conditions which force them to such degraded depths? I think not. They are tools in the hands of unscrupulous masters. These same people are as hungry as we are. They live in dives and wear rags the same as we do. They too are robbed by the masters, and their faces kept down in the filth of a decayed system. They are our fellowmen. Soon and very soon they and we will understand. Soon many Angelo Herndons<sup>1</sup> will rise from among them, and from among us, and will lead us both against those who live by the stench of our bunt flesh. We will crush them. We will build us a new society—a society of peace and plenty. There will be no color line, no jim-crow trains, no lynching. That is why, my dear, I’m here in Spain.

On the battlefields of Spain we fight for the preservation of democracy. Here, we’re laying the foundation for world peace, and for the liberation of my people, and of the human race. Here, where we’re engaged in one of the most bitter struggles of human history, there is no color line, no discrimination, no race hatred. There’s only one hate, and that is the hate for fascism. We know who are enemies are. The Spanish people are very sympathetic towards us. They are lovely people. I’ll tell you about them later.



<sup>1</sup> Angelo Herndon was an African American communist convicted for violating Georgia’s criminal insurrection law after he helped organize an interracial hunger march in Atlanta in 1932. In 1937 the United States Supreme Court found Georgia’s insurrection law to be unconstitutional. His brother, Milton Herndon, was a killed in action in Spain on October 13, 1937.

[...]

I promised not to preach, but by all indications this seems more like a sermon than a letter to an old friend. But how can I help it, being face to face with such trying circumstances? I'm quite conscious of the clumsiness of my effort to write you an intimate letter, but your knowledge of my earnestness and sincerity, with your intelligence and patience will enable you to understand and be tolerant. Later, after I've overcome this strain, I'm sure I'll be able to write more intimately. The consciousness of my responsibility for my actions has kept me under terrific strain. Because I think it has caused you a lot of unpleasantness.

Don't think for one moment that the strain of this terrible war or the many miles between us has changed my feelings towards you. Our friendship has meant a great deal to me, and still means much to me. I appreciate it because it has always been a friendship of devoted mutual interest. And I'll do whatever is within my power to maintain it.

No one knows the time he'll die, even under the most favorable conditions. So I, a soldier in active service, must know far less about how far or how close is death. But as long as I hold out I'll keep you in touch with events. Sometimes when I go to the front the shells drop pretty close. Then I think it is only a matter of minutes. After I return here to the base I seem to see life from a new angle. Somehow it seems to be more beautiful. I'd think of you, home and all my friends, then get to working more feverishly than ever. Each of us must give all we have if this Fascist beast is to be destroyed.

After this is over I hope to share my happiness with you. It will be a happiness which could not have been achieved in any other way than having served in a cause so worthy. I hope that the apparent wrong which I committed may be compensated for by the service I'm giving here for the cause of democracy. I hope that you're well, and that you will, or have, forgiven me. My sincere desire is that you are happy, and when this is over that we meet again. But if a Fascist bullet stops me don't worry about it. If I am conscious before I die I don't think I'll be afraid. Of one thing I'm certain: I'll be satisfied that I've done my part.

So long. Until some future date. One never knows when there'll be time to write. There's so much to do, and so little time in which to do it. Love.

Salud, Canute

**Canute Frankson** was born in the Parish of St. Catherine, Old Harbor, Jamaica on April 13, 1890. In 1917, together with his wife, Rachel, he emigrated to Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, where Frankson worked as a machinist. Frankson eventually settled in Detroit, where he worked in the auto industry. Frankson joined the Communist Party in 1934. He sailed for Europe aboard the *Queen Mary* on April 21, 1937. In Spain, skilled machinists were scarce and Frankson with his proven ability was rapidly promoted. He was appointed Head Mechanic at the International Garage in Albacete. Fellow International Garage veteran, Marion Noble, noted that Frankson's fluency in Spanish was a great asset and that many hours of his free time were spent teaching engine repair classes to young Spaniards. Frankson returned to the United States aboard the *President Harding* on September 24, 1938. Frankson was killed in an auto accident in either 1939 or 1940.



## Excerpts of a Letter from a wounded Hyman Katz to his Mother (Written from a hospital bed in Spain)



**Hyman Jacob Katz (Chaim)** was born on January 3, 1914. His mother was a Polish immigrant who arrived in New York City at the age of 12. Katz was brought up in Brooklyn and given an orthodox Jewish education. Katz joined the Communist Party in 1934. The passport he received on July 2, 1937, lists an address in Washington DC. His home in New York City was located on 55th Street in Borough Park, Brooklyn. He arrived in Spain on July 24, 1937. Once there, he served with the XVe Brigade, Lincoln-Washington Battalion, with the rank of *Soldado* (soldier). Katz was killed in action near Belchite on March 3, 1938 during the retreats.

According to Aaron Katz, Hyman's brother, "it was only after my mother had inadvertently learned that Hymie was in Spain and had been wounded that he wrote to assure her and to 'justify' his efforts in Spain." Here is that letter...

Dear Ma,

11/25/37

It is quite difficult for me to write this letter, but it must be done; Claire writes me that you know I'm in Spain. Of course, you know that the reason I didn't tell you where I was is that I didn't want to hurt you. I realize that I was foolish for not understanding that you would have to find out.

I came to Spain because I felt I had to. Look at the world situation. We didn't worry when Mussolini came to power in Italy. We felt bad when Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, but what could we do? We felt--though we tried to help and sympathize--that it was their problem and wouldn't affect us. Then the fascist governments sent out agents and began to gain power in other countries. Remember the anti-Semitic troubles in Austria only about a year ago. Look at what is happening in Poland; and see how the fascists are increasing their power in the Balkans--and Greece--and how the Italians are trying to play up to the Arab leaders.

Seeing all these things-- how fascism is grasping power in many countries (including the U.S., where there are many Nazi organizations and Nazi agents and spies)-- can't you see that fascism is our problem-- that it may come to us as it came in other countries? And don't you realize

that we Jews will be the first to suffer if fascism comes?

But if we didn't see clearly the hand of Mussolini and Hitler in all these countries, in Spain can't help seeing it.. Together with heir agent, Franco, they are trying to set up the same anti-progressive, anti-Semitic regime in Spain, as they have in Italy and Germany.

If we sit by and let them grow stronger by taking Spain, they will move on to France and will not stop there; and it won't be long before they get to America. Realizing this, can I sit by and wait until the beasts get to my very door-- until it is too late, and there is no one I can call on for help? And would I even deserve help from others when the trouble comes upon me, if I were to refuse help to those who need it today? If I permitted such a time to come--as a Jew and a progressive, I would be among the first to fall under the axe of the fascists;--all I could do then would be to curse myself and say, "Why didn't I get up when the alarm-clock rang?:"

But then it would be too late--just as it was too late for the Jews in Germany to find out in 1933 that they were wrong in believing that Hitler would never rule Germany.

[...]

I know that you are worried about me; but how often is the operation which worries us, most necessary to save us? Many mothers here, in places not close to the battle-front, would not let their children go to fight, until the fascist bombing planes came along, and then it was too late. Many mothers here have been crippled or killed, or their husbands and children maimed or killed; yet some of these mothers did not want to send their sons and husbands to the war, until the fascist bombs taught them in such a horrible manner--what common sense could not teach them.

Yes, Ma, this is a case where sons must go against their mothers' wishes for the sake of their mothers themselves. So I took up arms against the persecutors of my people--the Jews- -and my class--the Oppressed. I am fighting against those who establish an inquisition like that of their ideological ancestors several centuries ago, in Spain. Are these traits which you admire so much in a Prophet Jeremiah or a Judas Maccabeus bad when your son exhibits them? Of course, I am not a Jeremiah or a Judas; but I'm trying to with my own meager capabilities, to do what they did with their great capabilities, in the struggle for Liberty, capabilities, in the struggle for Liberty, wellbeing, and Peace...

Lovingly, Chaim

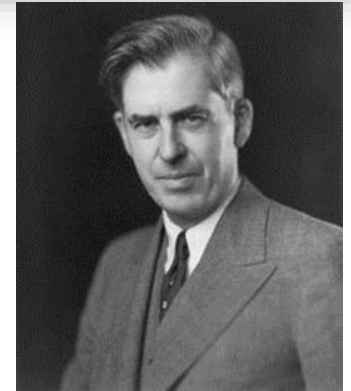
# Henry A. Wallace on the Danger of American Fascism

(New York Times, April 9, 1944)

Henry Agard Wallace (1888 – 1965) was the 33rd Vice President of the United States (1941–1945), the 11th Secretary of Agriculture (1933–1940), and the 10th Secretary of Commerce (1945–1946). He founded the Progressive Party and served as its presidential nominee in the 1948 presidential election. He was a strong supporter of New Deal liberalism and sought conciliation with the Soviet Union.

The son of Secretary of Agriculture Henry Cantwell Wallace, Henry A. Wallace was born in Adair County, Iowa. [...] In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Wallace as his Secretary of Agriculture. Though raised a Republican, Wallace joined the Democratic Party in 1936. [...] After Roosevelt dumped John Nance Garner from the ticket in 1940, he selected Wallace as his running mate in his bid for an unprecedented third term. The selection of the liberal Wallace upset many Democratic delegates, and Wallace was only nominated by the 1940 Democratic National Convention after Roosevelt threatened to decline the presidential nomination. The ticket of Roosevelt and Wallace defeated the Republican ticket in the 1940 election, and Wallace was sworn in as vice president in 1941. As Wallace remained unpopular with many Democratic leaders, the 1944 Democratic National Convention denied Wallace re-nomination and instead selected Harry S. Truman as Roosevelt's running mate in the 1944 presidential election. Roosevelt appointed Wallace to the position of Secretary of Commerce in March 1945 and Wallace continued to serve under President Truman after Roosevelt died in April 1945.

Truman dismissed Wallace in September 1946 after Wallace made several controversial comments. Wallace became the editor of *The New Republic* and emerged as a prominent critic of Truman's foreign policies. In 1948, he undertook a third party bid for president, calling for universal government health insurance, an end to the incipient Cold War, and the abolition of segregation. His campaign was undermined by accusations of Communist influences and his association with theosophist figures. Wallace received 2.4% of the popular vote, and Truman prevailed over Wallace, Republican Thomas E. Dewey, and Dixiecrat Strom Thurmond. After the election, Wallace returned to farming and studied agricultural science. He later published a memoir repudiating his foreign policy views, and he supported the Republican nominees in the 1956 and 1960 presidential elections. He died in Danbury, Connecticut in 1965. (From *Wikipedia*)



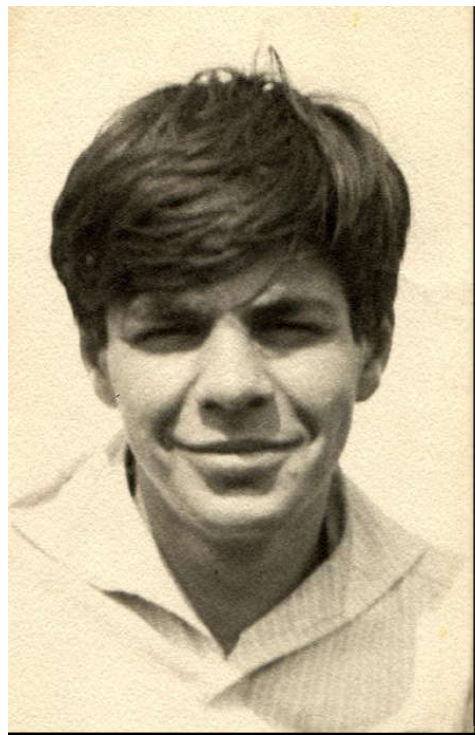
## Wallace Defines “American Fascism”

By Henry A. Wallace

1. On returning from my trip to the West in February, I received a request from *The New York Times* to write a piece answering the following questions:
  1. What is a fascist?
  2. How many fascists have we?
  3. How dangerous are they?
2. A fascist is one whose lust for money or power is combined with such an intensity of intolerance toward those of other races, parties, classes, religions, cultures, regions or nations as to make him ruthless in his use of deceit or violence to attain his ends. The supreme god of a fascist, to which his ends are directed, may be money or power; may be a race or a class; may be a military, clique or an economic group; or may be a culture, religion, or a political party.
3. The perfect type of fascist throughout recent centuries has been the Prussian Junker, who developed such hatred for other races and such allegiance to a military clique as to make him willing at all times to engage in any degree of deceit and violence necessary to place his culture and race astride the world. In every big nation of the world are at least a few people who have the fascist temperament. Every Jew-baiter, every Catholic hater, is a fascist at heart. The hoodlums who have been desecrating churches, cathedrals and synagogues in some of our larger cities are ripe material for fascist leadership.
4. The obvious types of American fascists are dealt with on the air and in the press. These demagogues and stooges are fronts for others. Dangerous as these people may be, they are not so significant as thousands of other people who have never been mentioned. The really dangerous American fascists are not those who are hooked up directly or indirectly with the Axis. The FBI has its finger on those. The dangerous American fascist is the man who wants to do in the United States in an American way what Hitler did in Germany in a Prussian way. The American fascist would prefer not to use violence. His method is to poison the channels of public information. With a fascist the problem is never how best to present the truth to the public but how best to use the news to deceive the public into giving the fascist and his group more money or more power.
5. If we define an American fascist as one who in case of conflict puts money and power ahead of human beings, then there are undoubtedly several million fascists in the United States. There are probably several hundred thousand if we narrow the definition to include only those who in their search for money and power are ruthless and deceitful. Most American fascists are enthusiastically supporting the war effort. They are doing this even in those cases where they hope to have profitable connections with German chemical firms after the war ends. They are patriotic in time of war because it is to their interest to be so, but in time of peace they follow power and the dollar wherever they may lead.

6. American fascism will not be really dangerous until there is a purposeful coalition among the cartelists, the deliberate poisoners of public information, and those who stand for the K.K.K. type of demagoguery.
7. [...]
8. Fascism is a worldwide disease. Its greatest threat to the United States will come after the war, either via Latin America or within the United States itself.
9. Still another danger is represented by those who, paying lip service to democracy and the common welfare, in their insatiable greed for money and the power which money gives, do not hesitate surreptitiously to evade the laws designed to safeguard the public from monopolistic extortion. American fascists of this stamp were clandestinely aligned with their German counterparts before the war, and are even now preparing to resume where they left off, after "the present unpleasantness" ceases:
10. The symptoms of fascist thinking are colored by environment and adapted to immediate circumstances. But always and everywhere they can be identified by their appeal to prejudice and by the desire to play upon the fears and vanities of different groups in order to gain power. It is no coincidence that the growth of modern tyrants has in every case been heralded by the growth of prejudice. It may be shocking to some people in this country to realize that, without meaning to do so, they hold views in common with Hitler when they preach discrimination against other religious, racial or economic groups. Likewise, many people whose patriotism is their proudest boast play Hitler's game by retailing distrust of our Allies and by giving currency to snide suspicions without foundation in fact.
11. The American fascists are most easily recognized by their deliberate perversion of truth and fact. Their newspapers and propaganda carefully cultivate every fissure of disunity, every crack in the common front against fascism. They use every opportunity to impugn democracy. They use isolationism as a slogan to conceal their own selfish imperialism. They cultivate hate and distrust of both Britain and Russia. They claim to be super-patriots, but they would destroy every liberty guaranteed by the Constitution. They demand free enterprise, but are the spokesmen for monopoly and vested interest. Their final objective toward which all their deceit is directed is to capture political power so that, using the power of the state and the power of the market simultaneously, they may keep the common man in eternal subjection.
12. [...]
13. It has been claimed at times that our modern age of technology facilitates dictatorship. What we must understand is that the industries, processes, and inventions created by modern science can be used either to subjugate or liberate. The choice is up to us. The myth of fascist efficiency has deluded many people. It was Mussolini's vaunted claim that he "made the trains run on time." In the end, however, he brought to the Italian people impoverishment and defeat. It was Hitler's claim that he eliminated all unemployment in Germany. Neither is there unemployment in a prison camp.

14. Democracy to crush fascism internally must demonstrate its capacity to "make the trains run on time." It must develop the ability to keep people fully employed and at the same time balance the budget. It must put human beings first and dollars second. It must appeal to reason and decency and not to violence and deceit. We must not tolerate oppressive government or industrial oligarchy in the form of monopolies and cartels. As long as scientific research and inventive ingenuity outran our ability to devise social mechanisms to raise the living standards of the people, we may expect the liberal potential of the United States to increase. If this liberal potential is properly channeled, we may expect the area of freedom of the United States to increase. The problem is to spend up our rate of social invention in the service of the welfare of all the people.
15. [...]
16. [...]
17. Fascism in the postwar inevitably will push steadily for Anglo-Saxon imperialism and eventually for war with Russia. Already American fascists are talking and writing about this conflict and using it as an excuse for their internal hatreds and intolerances toward certain races, creeds and classes.
18. It should also be evident that exhibitions of the native brand of fascism are not confined to any single section, class or religion. Happily, it can be said that as yet fascism has not captured a predominant place in the outlook of any American section, class or religion. It may be encountered in Wall Street, Main Street or Tobacco Road. Some even suspect that they can detect incipient traces of it along the Potomac. It is an infectious disease, and we must all be on our guard against intolerance, bigotry and the pretension of invidious distinction. But if we put our trust in the common sense of common men and "with malice toward none and charity for all" go forward on the great adventure of making political, economic and social democracy a practical reality, we shall not fail.



**Sam Levinger** grew up in Columbus, Ohio. He was a member of the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), and, after high school, he went on to study sociology at Ohio State University. He was also an excellent writer— of stories, letters and poetry. When the conflict in Spain broke out, Levinger volunteered to “fight against the fascists and big land-owners.” He fought in the battles of Jarama and Bruente, after which he was transferred to the Aragón front. He was wounded at Belchite and, due to a lack of medical supplies, he died not long after in Pueblo de Hajar. His body is buried in the town.

## *In case of death only, please send this to:*

*Mrs. Lee J. Levinger*

*2257 Indianola Ave.*

*Columbus, Ohio, USA*

*(Do not send in case of injury).*

Dear Mother and Father:

I suppose that by the time you receive this, I will have been dead several weeks. Of course, war is a confused thing, and I have seen enough certified corpses walking around to make me a little skeptical, but if you receive this and an official announcement too, count it as definite.

This is the last day of relief. We are going up to some front tomorrow to clear out the Fascists. I do not doubt that we will be successful in repatriating the boys across the street, but it will be at considerable cost, and as the Lincoln Battalion is good it should be in the middle of it.

I still stick by my original conviction that I will be alive long after a whole lot of dictators have died of lead poisoning or hardened arteries; but I've been wrong on other matters before. Hence I decided to write this letter.

Certainly I am not enthusiastic about dying. I've gotten a good bit of fun out of my first twenty years despite the fact that, except for the last six months they were pretty useless. I suppose I would have enjoy my next twenty just as much. I wanted to write this letter, however, to make it clear that there is absolutely nothing to regret.

If I were alive again I think I would join in the battle again at this crucial place. There was an extremely important job to do over here and I was one of the men who decided to do it. That a good many of us were killed while doing it is unfortunate, and the fact that I was killed is still more unfortunate from our standpoints. However, this has no relevance to the necessity of doing the job. This difference between world Fascism and world socialism is too great to permit our safeties to be a factor for consideration.

Next I want to beg both of you not to see this out of context. World change is a stern master. It has killed and will kill millions of boys as dear to somebody as I am to you. The Fascists want war, and bitter war we will give them.

You are more fortunate than many of the parents, for you still have two children with extremely bright futures. You have your extremely valuable work. I am less able to evaluate Father's work, though I realize its great worth; but in my field, that of an author, I can say I think Mother should become one of the



[...]

most valuable authors of the generation. And you still have the emancipation of America to be achieved.

I think my ideas on immortality agree largely with yours. I once wrote a lousy poem “If there is darkness beyond I shall sleep, if light I shall wake.” So if I meet you folks again all to the good— if not, we’ve had quite a bit of pleasure in each other’s company while it lasted.

As for my friends, give them my love if you run across them. Tell them I said there’s only one thing to remember—that there’s one comrade less to do the job of soldier of discontent. They’ll all have to do some work to make up for my getting perforated. See if that will get a few of these mugwumps into action.

This has been a clumsy letter. I just want to say that I love you both a great deal, and so forth. Also that it isn’t such a serious thing.

Love and revolutionary greetings.  
Joy to the world.

Samuel Levinger



Samuel Levinger

### Samuel Levinger on Writing this Letter...

“Suppose I do get bumped off. Suppose Harry won’t write home for me like he’s promised. I better do it myself. But suppose I’m just wounded. Suppose some fool finds the letters to mother and Clara and sends ‘em off. Nice anticlimax! But I’ve got to risk it.

It’s harder to write than I’d thought. I keep thinking of that book at home, *Letters of Fallen Englishmen*. Too bad I can’t just say, “Dear Parents, Consult *Letters of Fallen Englishmen*. Most of those boys were young like me, just past twenty; most of them loved their parents. Same sentiments here.” But of course that won’t do...”



## Letter from James Lardner to his mother, Ellis Lardner (May 1938)

James Lardner was born on May 18, 1914 in Chicago, Illinois. He was the second of four sons born to Ringgold (Ring) Wilmer Lardner, journalist and humorist, and Ellis Abbott Lardner, a Smith College graduate from a prominent Michigan family. In 1919, the Lardner family moved East and James, with his brothers, was raised in the affluent enclaves of Greenwich, Connecticut and Great Neck, Long Island. The boys came of age in the rich literary milieu formed by the writers and journalists the senior Lardners counted among their friends, including F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Dorothy Parker, Heywood Broun, and H. L. Mencken.

Lardner attended Andover and Harvard and, following his education, was hired as reporter for the New York Herald Tribune. According to his brother, Ring Lardner, Jr., James' early journalism experiences were a "monotonous round of funerals, banquets, strikes, accidents and minor crimes ..." After three years in New York City, Lardner transferred to the Herald Tribune's Paris bureau in 1938. While there he began writing articles on the participation of American volunteers in the Spanish Civil War. In March 1938 Lardner traveled to Barcelona in the company of fellow journalists Ernest Hemingway and Vincent Sheean to observe the conflict first hand. After witnessing an aerial battle that destroyed a bridge on the Ebro River and the dire state of the Loyalist forces, Lardner resolved to join the International Brigades.

His initial attempt to enlist found him in a ragged battalion in Badalona far from the field of action. Eager to participate in the conflict he left Badalona, made his way to Mora-la-Nueva, and enlisted in the Third Company of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade early in May. In July he sustained shrapnel injuries during his first battle. After a month of hospitalization he was returned to active duty in the Sierra Pandols region near the Ebro.

On September 23, 1938, on what was to be last day of fighting for the International Brigades, Lardner with two other men in his command were sent out to patrol a hill to the rear of his battalion. They encountered heavy enemy fire and Lardner did not return to camp. His death was confirmed several weeks later when a Nationalist correspondent reported that a body with foreign press credentials had been found in the location where Lardner was last seen. His body, which was discovered in fascist-controlled territory, was never recovered. According to Sheean, "Lardner, the last American to enlist, had been the last to be killed."

- Biography courtesy of Tamiment Library, NYU



Barcelona, May 3, 1938.

Mother, darling,

This is a letter which I started to write on April 10. At that time I thought I was going to have to break the news to you gently, but you seem to have heard it before I had the chance. I have kept putting off writing you because each day it seemed as if on the next I would know what I was going to do and where I would be stationed. I still don't know exactly what the situation is, but I am leaving in half an hour for Badalona, about seven miles up the coast, where I will learn the rudiments of artillery in company with a new mixed international unit. It looks as if French will be the medium of instruction. I shall let you know more as soon as I can.

This is a most exclusive army. It has taken me twelve days of going in from persons to person and office to office to get where I am. I have listened to advice of all varieties, a large part of it against my enlisting at all. The decision has been very much my own, and I took it after a great deal of consideration. My closest friend and principal adviser here has been Vincent (Jimmy) Sheean, who told me not to join, which shows you how stubborn I am, if you didn't know. Ernest Hemingway's advice was that it was a very fine thing if I wanted to fight against fascism, but that it was a personal matter that could only be decided by me.

I don't know how closely you have followed the war, but I imagine you must have an exaggerated idea of the danger of our position. On the map it looks as if Catalonia were a small fragment of territory about to be pushed into the Mediterranean, but in reality it is a lot of country, and I don't think it will ever be conquered. There are too many people here who are fighting for things they believe in, and too few on the other side.

My views on the whole question are too complicated for me to try to explain here. I hope you are on our side and will try to convince your friends that I am not just being foolish. Not that I mind being thought foolish, but American opinion is a very important factor.

I have made up a list of reasons why I am enlisting in the International Brigade, which is fairly accurate, as I did it for my own information. I am copying it here so that you may see for yourself which are the real ones. Some of them are picayune and most of them would have been insufficient in themselves, but all have something to do with it.



Because I believe that fascism is wrong and must be exterminated, and that liberal democracy or more probably communism is right.

Because my joining the I. P. might have an effect on the amendment of the neutrality act in the United States.

Because after the war is over I shall be a more effective anti-fascist.

Because in my ambitious quest for knowledge in all fields, I cannot afford in this age to overlook war.

Because I shall come into contact with a lot of communists, who are very good company and from whom I expect to learn things.

Because I am mentally lazy and should like to do some physical work for a change.

Because I need something remarkable in my background to make up for my unfortunate self-consciousness in social relations.

Because I am tired of working for the Herald Tribune in particular and newspapers in general.

Because I think it will be good for my soul.

Because there is a girl in Paris who will have to learn that ~~if~~ my presence is not necessary to her existence.

Because I want to impress various people, Bill for one.

Because I hope to find material for some writing, probably a play.

Because I want to improve my Spanish as well as my French.

Because I want to know what it is like to be afraid of something and I want to see how other people react to danger.

Because there may be a chance to do some reading and I won't have to wear a necktie.

Because I should like once more to get in good physical condition.

The first four reasons and the ninth, especially the first, are the most important ones in my opinion, but you may decide for yourself. I have also considered a few reasons why I should not join the army, such as that I might get seriously wounded or killed and that I shall cause you many weeks of worry. I am sorry for your sake that they are not enough to dissuade me. If it is any comfort to you at all, I still hate violence and cruelty and suffering and if I survive this war do not expect to take any dangerous part in the next.

If you still consider me one of your sons, you can send me an occasional letter and possibly a package now and then. My address here, I think, will be in care of the Brigadas Internacionales, but for a while I think it will be simpler to communicate through the Sheeans. Anything edible would be appreciated, milk chocolate or raisins, or anything in cans that does not require preparation.

Love,

*Jim*

[...]  
It is time for all Americans, Americans of all the Americas to stop being deluded by the romantic notion that the Americas can go on living happily and peacefully in a Nazi-dominated world. Generation after generation, America has battled for the general policy of the freedom of the seas. And that policy is a very simple one, but a basic, a fundamental one. It means that no nation has the right to make the broad oceans of the world at great distances from the actual theatre of land war, unsafe for the commerce of others.

That has been our policy, proved time and (time) again, in all of our history. Our policy has applied from (time immemorial) the earliest days of the Republic -- and still applies -- not merely to the Atlantic but to the Pacific and to all other oceans as well. Unrestricted submarine warfare in 1941 constitutes defiance -- an act of aggression -- against that historic American policy. It is now clear that Hitler has begun his campaign to control the seas by ruthless force and by wiping out every vestige of international law, (and) every vestige of humanity.

His intention has been made clear. The American people can have no further illusions about it. No tender whisperings of appeasers that Hitler is not interested in the Western Hemisphere, no soporific lullabies that a wide ocean protects us from him -- can long have any effect on the hard-headed, far-sighted and realistic American people. Because of these episodes, because of the movements and operations of German warships, and because of the clear, repeated proof that the present government of Germany has no respect for treaties or for international law, that it has no decent attitude toward neutral nations or human life -- we Americans are now face to face not with abstract theories but with cruel, relentless facts.

This attack on the GREER was no localized military operation in the North Atlantic. This was no mere episode in a struggle between two nations. This was one determined step towards creating a permanent world system based on force, on terror and on murder.

And I am sure that even now the Nazis are waiting, waiting to see whether the United States will by silence give them the green light to go ahead on this path of destruction.

The Nazi danger to our Western world has long ceased to be a mere possibility. The danger is here now -- not only from a military enemy but from an enemy of all law, all liberty, all morality, all religion.

There has now come a time when you and I must see the cold inexorable necessity of saying to these inhuman, unrestrained seekers of world conquest and permanent world domination by the sword: "You seek to throw our children and our children's children into your form of terrorism and slavery. You have now attacked our own safety. You shall go no further." Normal practices of diplomacy -- note writing -- are of no possible use in dealing with international outlaws who sink our ships and kill our citizens. One peaceful nation after another has met disaster because each refused to look the Nazi danger squarely in the eye until it had actually had them by the throat.

The United States will not make that fatal mistake.

No act of violence, (or) no act of intimidation will keep us from maintaining intact two bulwarks of American defense: First, our line of supply of material to the enemies of Hitler; and second, the freedom of our shipping on the high seas.

No matter what it takes, no matter what it costs, we will keep open the line of legitimate commerce in these defensive water of ours.

We have sought no shooting war with Hitler. We do not seek it now. But neither do we want peace so much, that we are willing to pay for it by permitting him to attack our naval and merchant ships while they are on legitimate business.

[...] I assume that the German leaders are not deeply concerned, tonight or any other time, by what we Americans or the American Government say or publish about them. We cannot bring about the downfall of Nazi-ism by the use of long-range invective.

But when you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him.

These Nazi submarines and raiders are the rattlesnakes of the Atlantic. They are a menace to the free pathways of the high seas. They are a challenge to our own sovereignty. They hammer at our most precious rights when they attack ships of the American flag -- symbols of our independence, our freedom, our very life.

It is clear to all Americans that the time has come when the Americas themselves must now be defended. A continuation of attacks in our own waters or in waters (which) that could be used for further and greater attacks on us, will inevitably weaken our American ability to repel Hitlerism.

Do not let us (split hairs) be hair-splitters. Let us not ask ourselves whether the Americas should begin to defend themselves after the (fifth) first attack, or the (tenth) fifth attack, or the tenth attack, or the twentieth attack. The time for active defense is now.

[....]

It is no act of war on our part when we decide to protect the seas (which) that are vital to American defense. The aggression is not ours. Ours is solely defense.

But let this warning be clear. From now on, if German or Italian vessels of war enter the waters, the protection of which is necessary for American defense, they do so at their own peril.

The orders which I have given as Commander-in-Chief (to) of the United States Army and Navy are to carry out that policy -- at once. The sole responsibility rests upon Germany. There will be no shooting unless Germany continues to seek it.

That is my obvious duty in this crisis. That is the clear right of this sovereign nation.



FDR on 09/11/1941 preparing for Fireside Chat #18. He is wearing the black armband to mourn the recent death of his mother.

**Fireside chats** is the term used to describe a series of 30 evening radio conversations (chats) given by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt between 1933 and 1944. The shortest of these chats was 13 minutes long and the longest was 44 minutes.





**Charles Lindbergh** was a famous aviator, having made the first solo non-stop flight across the Atlantic Ocean in 1927.

After the outbreak of WWII, Lindbergh was a spokesperson for the “America First Committee” [AFC], which advocated for non-US intervention. The AFC, founded in September 1940, was dissolved on December 10, 1941, just three days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

On September 11, 1941, Lindbergh delivered a speech in Iowa in which he advocates a position of non-interventionism and identifies the three main groups that he believed had been pushing this country into war. Here is an abridged version of that speech...

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## Des Moines Speech by Charles Lindbergh

“It is now two years since this latest European war began. From that day in September, 1939, until the present moment, there has been an over-increasing effort to force the United States into the conflict.

That effort has been carried on by foreign interests, and by a small minority of our own people; but it has been so successful that, today, our country stands on the verge of war.

At this time, as the war is about to enter its third winter, it seems appropriate to review the circumstances that have led us to our present position. Why are we on the verge of war? Was it necessary for us to become so deeply involved? Who is responsible for changing our national policy from one of neutrality and independence to one of entanglement in European affairs?

[....]

When this war started in Europe, it was clear that the American people were solidly opposed to entering it. Why shouldn't we be? We had the best defensive position in the world; we had a tradition of independence from Europe; and the one time we did take part in a European war left European problems unsolved, and debts to America unpaid.

[....]

The three most important groups who have been pressing this country toward war are the British, the Jewish and the Roosevelt administration.

Behind these groups, but of lesser importance, are a number of capitalists, Anglophiles, and intellectuals who believe that the future of mankind depends upon the domination of the British empire. Add to these the Communistic groups who were opposed to intervention until a few weeks ago, and I believe I have named the major war agitators in this country.



[...] No person with a sense of the dignity of mankind can condone the persecution of the Jewish race in Germany. But no person of honesty and vision can look on their pro-war policy here today without seeing the dangers involved in such a policy both for us and for them. Instead of agitating for war, the Jewish groups in this country should be opposing it in every possible way for they will be among the first to feel its consequences.

Tolerance is a virtue that depends upon peace and strength. History shows that it cannot survive war and devastations. A few far-sighted Jewish people realize this and stand opposed to intervention. But the majority still do not.

Their greatest danger to this country lies in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio and our government.

I am not attacking either the Jewish or the British people. Both races, I admire. But I am saying that the leaders of both the British and the Jewish races, for reasons which are as understandable from their viewpoint as they are inadvisable from ours, for reasons which are not American, wish to involve us in the war.

We cannot blame them for looking out for what they believe to be their own interests, but we also must look out for ours. We cannot allow the natural passions and prejudices of other peoples to lead our country to destruction.

The Roosevelt administration is the third powerful group which has been carrying this country toward war. Its members have used the war emergency to obtain a third presidential term for the first time in American history. They have used the war to add unlimited billions to a debt which was already the highest we have ever known. And they have just used the war to justify the restriction of congressional power, and the assumption of dictatorial procedures on the part of the president and his appointees.

[....]

When hostilities commenced in Europe, in 1939, it was realized by these groups that the American people had no intention of entering the war. They knew it would be worse than useless to ask us for a declaration of war at that time. But they believed that this country could be entered into the war in very much the same way we were entered into the last one.

They planned: first, to prepare the United States for foreign war under the guise of American defense; second, to involve us in the war, step by step, without our realization; third, to create a series of incidents which would force us into the actual conflict. These plans were of course, to be covered and assisted by the full power of their propaganda.

[....]

First, we agreed to sell arms to Europe; next, we agreed to loan arms to Europe; then we agreed to patrol the ocean for Europe; then we occupied a European island in the war zone. Now, we have reached the verge of war.

[....]

We are on the verge of war, but it is not yet too late to stay out. It is not too late to show that no amount of money, or propaganda, or patronage can force a free and independent people into war against its will. It is not yet too late to retrieve and to maintain the independent American destiny that our forefathers established in this new world. [...]"

-Charles A. Lindbergh



1940: General Franco (second to the left) and Hitler (R).



1959: General Franco (R) with President Eisenhower (L)

Many people remember the 1959 Franco-Eisenhower embrace in Madrid because it cements the popular image of a friendship between Francoist Spain and the US, based on the common goal of "containing" communism. But this Cold War rapprochement shouldn't lead us to forget what Franco had looked like to US leaders before the Cold War got hot. Consider, for example, what Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR), near the end of his life, said and thought about Franco. The following is a letter that Roosevelt sent to the newly appointed US ambassador in Spain in March of 1945...

...

"My Dear Mr. Armour:

In connection with your new assignment as ambassador to Madrid I want you to have a frank statement of my views with regard to our relations with Spain.

Having been helped to power by Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, and having patterned itself along totalitarian lines, the present regime in Spain is naturally the subject of distrust by a great many American citizens who find it difficult to see the justification for this country to continue to maintain relations with such a regime. Most certainly we do not forget Spain's

Official position with and assistance to our Axis enemies at a time when the fortunes of war were less favorable to us, nor can we disregard the activities, aims, organizations, and public utterances of the Falange, both past and present. These memories cannot be wiped out by actions more favorable to us now that we are about to achieve our goal of complete victory over those enemies of ours with whom the present Spanish regime identified itself in the past spiritually and by its public expressions and acts.

The fact that our government maintains formal diplomatic relations with the present Spanish regime should not be interpreted by anyone to imply approval of that regime and its sole party, the Falange, which has been openly hostile to the United States and which has tried to spread its fascist party ideas in the Western Hemisphere. Our victory over Germany will carry with it the extermination of Nazi and similar ideologies."

FDR



## Red Scares and Blacklists

**O**n March 10, 1949, the anguished Milton Wolff paid a call on William C. Dunham, chief of the Spanish desk at the State Department in Washington, D.C. The Franco government had recently sentenced nine Spaniards to death for leading protests against the regime, and Wolff had come to plead for U.S. intervention to save their lives. A transcription of their conversation survives.

**DUNHAM:** "Of course, we do not make representations in the cases of avowed communists. You wouldn't expect us to, would you?"

**WOLFF:** "After all, we have a certain responsibility for the actions of these men. State Department releases . . . and the United States position at the United Nations, all call for a change in the Franco government. That is what these men are trying to bring about. We should support their efforts by more than just words."

**DUNHAM:** "All our statements specify 'by peaceful and orderly means.'"

**WOLFF:** "They cannot make a change without organizing and belonging to a trade union, a nationalist

group, or a banned political party, and belonging to such a group, or party, is considered an act of violence against the government by Franco.”

DUNHAM: “Nevertheless, we cannot and will not intervene except in rare cases.”

WOLFF: “Not even in the name of justice? Not even if the case is an obvious frame-up and the death sentence is handed down in a summary court martial?”

DUNHAM: “That is right. But come, they are not summary courts martial. They are military trials and they are not adequately defended, that is true, but they are permitted to make long harangues in their own behalf before being sentenced. Not half so many are being executed these last months as were executed before. [At this point Wolff apparently made an unrecorded comment.] Ha, ha, ha, yes. . . . Maybe there aren’t as many left to be shot . . . hah, hah, hah. Yes, I will send a wire to Culbertson in Madrid inquiring about these names. . . . If the men are not communists and haven’t blown a bridge or killed anyone, we might make representations in their behalf.”

Wolff then turned to the question of the Latin American countries reopening their embassies in Spain, with the approval and encouragement of the United States.

DUNHAM: “Of course! We were against withdrawing the ambassadors in the first place. . . . Never helped any, this withdrawal.” . . .

WOLFF: “The withdrawal of ambassadors was a weak move, but it was better than the nothing you all proposed. . . . The thing we want is not a retreat from this weak action, but more positive action—a break in relations.”

. . .

DUNHAM: “Positively not! We are not going to break relations with Spain. . . . There is no support for such action! . . . No, I don’t mean there isn’t any anti-Franco feeling . . . but no support for a break. No, I am not sure how much anti-Franco feeling there is in America. Sure I know about the protests . . . mere form letters and cards.”

WOLFF: “A signed postcard is a better gauge of public opinion than a Gallup poll. . . . After all, people don’t sit down and write letters. . . . They should be paid more attention to.”

DUNHAM: "That is interesting, the way you put it I mean. But . . ."

WOLFF: "You mean that is the way it is officially considered?"

No reply.

Dunham then expressed uncertainty about the U.S. position regarding the admission of Franco into the United Nations.

WOLFF: "Well, you are getting everything worked out the way you want it.

You blocked, parried and delayed all actions against Franco since 1945 when there was the best possibility to restore the Spanish republic . . . with just this idea in mind. To sweep another tinhorn dictator into the basement along with the other dictators, kings, etc., that you have already collected."

DUNHAM: "You credit us with too much foresight. I am sure that that was not the original plan."

WOLFF: "You couldn't have planned it better."

## The Truman Doctrine (1947)

*The Truman Doctrine was an American foreign policy whose stated purpose was to counter Soviet geopolitical expansion during the Cold War. It was first announced to Congress by President Harry S. Truman on March 12, 1947.*

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Congress of the United States:

The gravity of the situation which confronts the world today necessitates my appearance before a joint session of the Congress. The foreign policy and the national security of this country are involved.

One aspect of the present situation, which I wish to present to you at this time for your consideration and decision, concerns Greece and Turkey.

The United States has received from the Greek Government an urgent appeal for financial and economic assistance. Preliminary reports from the American Economic Mission now in Greece and reports from the American Ambassador in Greece corroborate the statement of the Greek Government that assistance is imperative if Greece is to survive as a free nation.

[...]

The British government has informed us that, owing to its own difficulties can no longer extend financial or economic aid to Turkey.

[...]

One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion. This was a fundamental issue in the war with Germany and Japan. Our victory was won over countries which sought to impose their will, and their way of life, upon other nations.

[...]

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one.



One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio; fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.

I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

The world is not static, and the status quo is not sacred. But we cannot allow changes in the status quo in violation of the Charter of the United Nations by such methods as coercion, or by such subterfuges as political infiltration. In helping free and independent nations to maintain their freedom, the United States will be giving effect to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

[...]

Should we fail to aid Greece and Turkey in this fateful hour, the effect will be far reaching to the West as well as to the East.

We must take immediate and resolute action.

I therefore ask the Congress to provide authority for assistance to Greece and Turkey in the amount of \$400,000,000 for the period ending June 30, 1948.

[...]

This is a serious course upon which we embark.

I would not recommend it except that the alternative is much more serious. The United States contributed \$341,000,000,000 toward winning World War II. This is an investment in world freedom and world peace.

[...]

The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died. We must keep that hope alive.

The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedoms.

*Transcription courtesy of [the Avalon Project](#) at Yale Law School.*



**Jay Allen** (1900–1972) was an American journalist who reported on the Spanish Civil War & WWII.

He worked for the Chicago Tribune and NANA. In this article from *Survey Graphic* (Nov. 1939), he covers the fate of the hundreds of thousands of Spanish Republican refugees who were stuck in French concentration camps after fleeing Franco's Spain. This is an excerpt.

Spain in France — 2063 schoolteachers, 2440 printers, 2809 electricians, 5922 woodworkers, 10,272 mechanics, 45,918 peasants. Also dentists, engineers, surgeons, architects . . . and a hundred thousand old people and children

Photograph by Ione Robinson

# Hostages of Appeasement

by JAY ALLEN

**"The experiment which opened to such bright hopes in the spring of 1931 has been destroyed . . . chiefly by the fact that it was born into a fiercely illiberal world which betrayed it at every step."—*New York Herald Tribune*, February 7, 1939.**

RESURRECTION OF THE SPANISH REPUBLIC IS NOT ON THE war program of the Allies.

Mr. Chamberlain has expressed his regrets to Czechoslovakia and to Poland and promised them that they will rise again. The way things are shaping up even this is a large order. But there was also Spain. It may well be that the redemption of Czechoslovakia and of Poland will call for a military triumph on a grand scale over the conquerors who now hold them. It is not so with Spain. For the Spanish Republic lies physically, as well as in a moral sense, on the hands of those who betrayed it. It can be saved by humanitarian endeavor, not by battle. For on French soil are close to 300,000 refugees—the flower and sap of the Republic and the sole hope of the millions still in Spain under General Franco's ruthless improvisations. Save them and the Spanish Republic is saved for the future, no matter what the political exigencies that maintain the generalissimo precariously in power for a time.

[...]

France, at war, finds them an even greater problem. The children are being sent back to Spain when Franco authorities, claiming the parents to be there, ask for them. And remember that Franco's punitive "Law of Political Responsibilities" applies to everyone down to the age of fourteen. All adults are under fearful pressure to go back. Franco has promised immunity from his "purification" processes if they are not guilty of what he calls "crime." The sincerity of such an amnesty would have to be checked on the spot by an international commission which would see to it that Franco's definition of crime would not endanger the refugees. Since being a freemason or a democrat or a socialist is defined as crime in the statutes of Nationalist Spain, an amnesty might prove to be a very frail guarantee indeed. Of the 82,000 refugee militiamen, France has taken only 16,000 into industry and agriculture; 24,000 are in labor battalions; and 42,000 are still in concentration camps, where they have been for over eight months. One hundred thousand old men, women and children are also in camps. These are official French figures.

The point is not so much that these heroes of the first and, to date, only real war against fascism in Europe have sunk deeper into misery. It is that their hopes have been blighted. Their own carefully devised plans to transplant their republic to the New World, there to keep it alive





Three photographs courtesy of Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign  
 Men from abandoned Spanish industries, such as those at the Barcenes refugee camp, are in labor battalions at 50 centimes a day



A relief truck arrives at the Villenoves camp near Meaux

all of Europe, and often in those early days you saw Spain pictured as a bull standing bloody but defiant, with a Hitler caught on one horn and a Mussolini on the other. That was in the days before the thing called Non-Intervention was shown up to be the beginnings of the formula for surrender that in its later, more brutal, aspects came to be called Appeasement. There were still many illusions in Spain then.

The responsibility had been still more clearly underlined by President Roosevelt who, a few weeks before in his message to Congress, admitted that our "neutrality" had favored the aggressor. "During those eight years from 1931," he said, "many of our people clung to the hope that the innate decency of mankind would protect the unprepared who showed their innate trust in mankind. Today we are all wiser and sadder." The Spaniards had shown their innate trust. For had they not legislated their neutrality *in aeternum* by writing the League Covenant and the Kellogg Pact into their Constitution in 1931?

IN FRANCE THEY WERE HERDED INTO CONCENTRATION CAMPS, quarantined for having fought too long and too well for democracy. Darker days were to come, as appeasement tightened. The Spanish Republic's gold that might have kept them sheltered and fed was sent back to Franco. The generalissimo became a favorite with nice people. The United States came forward with a loan of \$13,500,000 dollars for the Spanish dictator and the U. S. State Department admits no knowledge of executions.

until the day when it should live again at home, have been cut short. Yesterday *victims* of appeasement, today they are *hostages* of appeasement; held thus to please General Franco who, if he so deigns, can one day become the glorious ally of the embattled democracies. There is little hope of a change in the French attitude. Help must come from some other countries

which are not yet so desperately engaged in the struggle for democracy as to have to make such strategic capitulations in its name.

### The Spain That Was

FROM BELOW THE PYRENEES COMES the echo of the firing squads cleaning up the unfinished business encouraged by the Non-Intervention Committee, and the day may well come, and soon, when General Franco will ask a price for joining in the crusade to save democracy.

All this is a far cry from the epic days of the defense of Madrid in 1936. The Spanish Republicans were very proud then. They were sure, then, that they were fending off the menace for



Not afraid to look into the sky — these Spanish children have found a sanctuary at the Morelia settlement, in Mexico

In this country, for some reason, efforts by certain groups to label all Spanish refugee relief activity as something bordering on subversion have been for a time more successful than elsewhere. This factor, together with the shift of interest and the uncertainties of the outbreak of the war, resulted in a ruinous falling off of contributions. In England and France the war has brought down the

contributions almost to zero. No funds can be sent from England for such purposes, and in France general mobilization has paralyzed most of the relief work.

Edited Transcript for courtroom reenactment of "On the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising," from pp. 194-6 of *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial 1945-46: A Documentary History*, by Michael R. Marrus. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1997.

Major Walsh: *I would now like to discuss annihilation within the ghettos. Justice Jackson in his opening address to the Tribunal made reference to Document 1061-PS, "The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More," marked Exhibit USA-275.*

*This finest example of ornate German craftsmanship, leather bound, profusely illustrated, typed on heavy bond paper, is the almost unbelievable recital of a proud accomplishment by Major General of the Police Jurgen Stroop, who signed the report with a bold hand. General Stroop in this report first pays tribute to the bravery and heroism of the German forces who participated in the ruthless and merciless action against a helpless, defenseless group of Jews, numbering, to be exact 56,065, including, of course, the infants and the women. In this document he proceeds to relate the day-by-day account of the ultimate accomplishment of his mission – to destroy and to obliterate the Warsaw ghetto. According to this report, the ghetto, which was established in Warsaw in November 1940, was inhabited by about 400,000 Jews; and prior to the action for the destruction of this ghetto, some 316,000 had already been deported.*

The President: *You are going to read the passages that you think necessary?*

Major Walsh: *Yes. From page 6 of the translation... I would like to read the boastful but nonetheless vivid account of some of this ruthless action within the Warsaw ghetto:*

*(Begins reading from book) "The resistance put up by the Jews and bandits could be broken only by the relentless and energetic use of our shock-troops by day and night. On 23 April 1943 the Reichsfuhrer SS issued his order to complete the combing out of the Warsaw ghetto with the greatest severity and relentless tenacity. I therefore decided to destroy the entire Jewish residential area by setting every block on fire, including the blocks of residential buildings near the armaments works. One building after the other was systematically evacuated and subsequently destroyed by fire. The Jews then emerged from their hiding places and dugouts in almost every case. Not infrequently the Jews stayed in the burning buildings until, because of the heat and the fear of being burned alive, they preferred to jump down from the upper stories after having thrown mattresses and other upholstered articles into the street from the burning buildings. With their bones broken they still tried to crawl across the street into blocks of buildings which had not yet been set on fire or were only partially in flames. Often the Jews changed their hiding places during the night by moving into the ruins of burnt out buildings, taking refuge there until they were found by our patrols. Their stay in the sewers also ceased to be pleasant after the first week. Frequently from the street we could hear loud voices coming through the sewer shafts. Then the men of the Waffen-SS, the Police, or the Wehrmacht Engineers courageously climbed down the shafts to bring out the Jews and not infrequently they then stumbled over Jews already dead, or were shot at. One day we opened 183 sewer entrance holes and at a fixed time lowered smoke candles into them, with the result that the bandits fled from what they believed to be gas into the center of the former ghetto, where they could then be pulled out of the sewer holes there. A great number of Jews who could not be counted were exterminated by blowing up sewers and dugouts.*

*The longer the resistance lasted, the tougher the men of the Waffen-SS Police, and Wehrmacht became. They fulfilled their duty indefatigably in faithful comradeship and stood together as models and examples of soldiers. Their duty hours often lasted from early morning until late at night. At night*



*search patrols, with rags would around their feet, remained at the heels of the Jews and gave them no respite. Not infrequently they caught and killed Jews who used the night hours for supplementing their stores from abandoned dugouts and for contacting neighboring groups or exchanging news with them.*

*Considering that the greater part of the men of the Waffen-SS had only been trained for 3 to 4 weeks before being assigned to this action, high credit should be given to the pluck, courage, and devotion to duty which they showed. It must be stated that the Wehrmacht Engineers, too, executed the blowing up of dugouts, sewers, and concrete buildings with indefatigability and great devotion to duty. Officers and men of the Police, a large part of whom had already been at the front, again excelled by their dashing spirit. Only through the continuous and untiring work of all involved did we succeed in catching a total of 56,065 Jews whose extermination can be proved."*

*The President: Major Walsh, in the section that you are just upon now, ought you not to read the opening paragraphs of this document, which set out the amount of the losses of the German troops?*

*Major Walsh: I will do so, Sir. On Page 1 of the translation, I quote. The title: "The Warsaw Ghetto is no more."*

*(Begins reading) "For the Fuhrer and their country the following fell in the battle for the destruction of Jews and bandits in the former Jewish residential area of Warsaw."*

*Fifteen names are thereafter listed.*

*(Continues reading) "Furthermore, the Polish Police Sergeant Julian Zielenski, born 13 November 1891, 8<sup>th</sup> Commissariat, fell on 19 April 1943 while fulfilling his duty. They gave their utmost, their life. We shall never forget them."*

Edited Transcript for courtroom reenactment of "Testimony on the Gassing at Auschwitz," from pp. 155-7 of *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial 1945-46: A Documentary History*, by Michael R. Marrus. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1997.

Mme. Vaillant-Couturier: *We saw the unsealing of the cars and the soldiers letting men, women, and children out of them. We then witnessed heart-rending scenes; old couples forced to part from each other, mothers made to abandon their young daughters, since the latter were sent to the camp, whereas mothers and children were sent to the gas chambers. All these people were unaware of the fate awaiting them. They were merely upset at being separated, but they did not know that they were going to their death. To render their welcome more pleasant at this time – June – July 1944 – an orchestra composed of internees, all young and pretty girls dressed in little white blouses and navy blue skirts, played during the selection, at the arrival of the trains, gay tunes such as "the merry Widow," the "Barcarolle" from "The Tales of Hoffman," and so forth. They were then informed that this was a labor camp and since they were not brought into the camp they saw only the small platform surrounded by flowering plants. Naturally, they could not realize what was in store for them. Those selected for the gas chamber, that is, the old people, mothers, and children, were escorted to a red-brick building.*

M. Dubost: *These were not given an identification number?*

Vaillant-Couturier: *No.*

Dubost: *They were not tattooed?*

Vaillant-Couturier: *No. They were not even counted.*

Dubost: *You were tattooed?*

Vaillant-Couturier: *Yes, look. [The witness showed her arm.] They were taken to a red brick building, which bore the letters "Baden," that is to say "Baths." There, to begin with, they were made to undress and given a towel before they went into the so-called shower room. Later on, at the time of the large convoys from Hungary, they had no more time left to play-act or to pretend; they were brutally undressed, and I know these details from a little Jewess from France.*

Dubost: *In Paris?*

Vaillant-Couturier: *In Paris. She was called "Little Marie" and she was the only one, the sole survivor of a family of nine. Her mother and her seven brothers and sisters had been gassed on arrival. When I met her she was employed to undress the babies before they were taken into the gas chamber. Once the people were undressed they took them into a room which was somewhat like a shower room, and gas capsules were thrown through an opening in the ceiling. An SS man would watch the effect produced through a porthole. At the end of 5 or 7 minutes, when the gas had completed its work, he gave the signal to open the doors; and men with gas masks went into the room and removed the corpses. They told us that the internees must have suffered before dying, because they were closely clinging to one another and it was very difficult to separate them.*

*After that a special squad would come to pull out gold teeth and dentures; and again, when the bodies had been reduced to ashes, they would sift them in an attempt to recover the gold.*

*At Auschwitz there were eight crematories but, as from 1944, these proved insufficient. The SS had large pits dug by the internees, where they put branches, sprinkled with gasoline, which they set on fire. Then they threw the corpses into the pits. From our block we could see after about three-quarters of an hour or an hour after the arrival of a convoy, large flames coming from the crematory, and the sky was lighted up by the burning pits.*

*One night we were awakened by terrifying cries. And we discovered, on the following day from the men working, that on the preceding day, the gas supply having run out, they had thrown the children into the furnaces alive.*

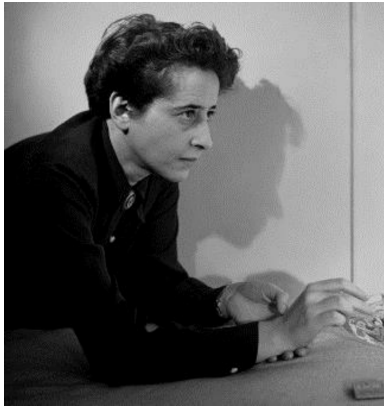
Dubost: *Can you tell us about the selections that were made at the beginning of winter?*

Vaillant-Couturier: *During Christmas 1944 – no, 1943, Christmas 1943 – when we were in quarantine, we saw, since we lived opposite Block 25, women brought to Block 25 stripped naked. Uncovered trucks were then driven up and on them the naked women were piled, as many as the trucks could hold. Each time a truck started, the infamous Hessler ran after the truck and with his bludgeon repeatedly struck the naked women going to their death. They knew they were going to the gas chamber and tried to escape. They were massacred. They attempted to jump from the truck and we, from our own block, watched the trucks pass by and heard the grievous wailing of all those women who knew they were going to be gassed.*

## Hannah Arendt on Statelessness and the Refugee Problem (1951)

From: Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1979 [1<sup>st</sup> ed: 1951]), pp. 276-280.

*Hannah Arendt was a Jewish refugee intellectual. She left Nazi Germany in 1933 and eventually escaped to the United States in 1950. Stripped of her German citizenship in 1937, she became a U.S. citizen the same year she arrived in the country.*



[...] [S]tatelessness [is] the newest mass phenomenon in contemporary history, and the [...] ever-growing new people comprised of stateless persons [is] the most symptomatic group in contemporary politics. [...] [E]very political event since the end of the first World War inevitably added a new category to those who lived outside the pale of the law, [...]

[After World War II], refugees who had been forced out of their countries [...] were promptly denationalized by the victorious governments at home. To this group belong, in chronological order, millions of Russians, hundreds of thousands of Armenians, thousands of Hungarians, hundreds of thousands of Germans, and more than half a million Spaniards—to enumerate only the more important categories. The behavior of these governments may appear today to be the natural consequence of civil war; but at the time mass denationalizations were something entirely new and unforeseen. They presupposed a state structure which [...] would rather lose its citizens than harbor people with different views. [...]

**No paradox of contemporary politics is filled with a more poignant irony than the discrepancy between the efforts of well-meaning idealists who stubbornly insist on regarding as “inalienable” those human rights, which are enjoyed only by cit-**

**izens of the most prosperous and civilized countries, and the situation of the rightless themselves.** Their situation has deteriorated just as stubbornly, until the internment camp—prior to the Second World War the exception rather than the rule for the stateless—has become the routine solution for the problem of domicile of the “displaced persons.”

[...] Since non-totalitarian countries, in spite of their bad intentions inspired by the climate of war, generally have shied away from mass repatriations, the number of stateless people—twelve years after the end of the war—is larger than ever. [...] Worse still, the number of potentially stateless people is continually on the increase. Prior to the last war, only totalitarian or half-totalitarian dictatorships resorted to the weapon of denaturalization with regard to those who were citizens by birth; now we have reached the point where even free democracies, as, for instance, the United States, were seriously considering depriving native Americans who are Communists of their citizenship. The sinister aspect of these measures is that they are being considered in all innocence. Yet, one need only remember the extreme care of the Nazis, who insisted that all Jews of non-German nationality “should be deprived of their citizenship either prior to, or, at the latest, on the day of deportation” (for German Jews such a decree was not needed, because in the Third Reich there existed a law according to which all Jews who had left the territory—including, of course, those deported to a Polish camp—automatically lost their citizenship) in order to realize the true implications of statelessness.

The first great damage done to the nation-states as a result of the arrival of hundreds of thousands of stateless people was that the right of asylum, the only right that had ever figured as a symbol of the Rights of Man in the sphere of international relationships, was being abolished. Its long and sacred history dates back to the very beginnings of regulated political life. Since ancient times it has protected both the refugee and the land of refuge from situations in which people were forced to become outlaws through circumstances beyond their control. [...] But though the right of asylum continued to function in a world organized into nation-states and, in individual instances, even survived both World Wars, it was felt to be an anachronism and in conflict with the international rights of the state. [...]

## Edward Barsky and the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee

*Edward K. Barsky* was born in New York on June 6, 1895, the son of Dr. Joseph Barsky, a prominent New York physician and a founder of Beth Israel Hospital. One of a family of six children, he attended public elementary school, graduated from Townsend Harris High School and received his college degree from City College of New York. Following the example of his father and two of his brothers, Barsky pursued a career in medicine receiving his formal education at Columbia University of Physicians and Surgeons and subsequently conducting post-graduate study abroad in Vienna, Berlin, and Paris. Beginning in 1919 he served a two-year internship at Beth Israel Hospital where he subsequently advanced through the positions of Visiting Staff, Assistant Adjunct Surgeon, and Adjunct Surgeon before assuming the position of Associate Surgeon in 1934. In November 1935, Barsky became a member of the Communist Party.

With the outbreak civil war in Spain in 1936, Barsky joined with a group of concerned New York physicians to establish the American Medical Bureau to Aid Spanish Democracy (AMB) -- an adjunct organization to the North America Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, later known as the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy. The AMB arranged for the shipment of ambulances and other medical equipment and supplies, and in January 1937 sent a fully outfitted medical team of doctors, nurses, and technicians to Spain with Barsky at the helm. Additional medical personnel soon followed and under Barsky's command, base hospitals and convalescent homes were set up in schools and monasteries. Emergency units were established on the front lines in ambulances, makeshift tents, and a mobile medical hospital outfitted with a battery-powered operating room. By the following year 117 American doctors, nurses, and ambulance drivers had volunteered to serve in Spain. Barsky returned briefly to the United States in 1937 to conduct a national speaking tour, securing additional funds and supplies for the AMB. With his returned to Spain, he assumed charge of the Sanitary Services of the International Brigade, overseeing hundreds of international medical volunteers—a position he held until the withdrawal of the foreign forces in January 1939.

Back in the United States Barsky resumed his work at Beth Israel Hospital. He married Vita Lauter, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, and the couple had one child -- a daughter named Angela. In the wake of the war in Spain, Barsky turned his attention to securing relief for Spanish exiles who were living in deplorable conditions in French refugee camps, and Republican prisoners in Spain. In 1941 Barsky played a key role in the formation of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee (JAFRC), an organization dedicated to aiding Spanish refugees and lobbying the U.S. leadership on behalf of the deposed Republican government. With Barsky as chairman, the organization raised closed to \$400,000 in its first two years of operation. By 1945, however, the JAFRC's progressive agenda attracted the hostile attention of the House on Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Barsky, Executive Secretary Helen R. Bryan, and Executive Board members of JAFRC were subpoenaed to appear before the committee, surrender financial records, and turn over the names of contributors and recipients of aid. After refusing to comply with HUAC demands, Barsky and entire board of JAFRC were charged with contempt of Congress and convicted in June 1947.

Three years of appeals that challenged the constitutionality of the HUAC hearings ended in 1950 when the Supreme Court refused to review the convictions. The board members, including novelist Howard Fast, were sentenced to three months in prison, and Barsky, as the JAFRC's chairman, was sentenced to six months in the Federal Penitentiary in Petersburg, Virginia and fined \$500. Following his release, the New York State Board of Regents moved to censure Barsky and—citing his conviction and subsequent imprisonment—suspended his medical license. Although he received the unstinting support of his medical colleagues who filed an *Amici Curiae*



on his behalf, in 1954, after four years of appeals, the Supreme Court upheld a six-month suspension of his license. Writing in a dissenting opinion, Judge William O. Douglas asserted, "When a doctor cannot save lives in America because he is opposed to Franco in Spain, it is time to call a halt and look critically at the neurosis that has possessed us."

Barsky remained committed to progressive causes throughout his life. In 1952 he worked on behalf of the American Labor Party and its candidate, Vincent Hallihan, who was chief counsel for Harry Bridges and at the time of the election was serving a six months sentence for contempt of congress. During the 1960s, Barsky was active with the Medical Committee for Human Rights, which provided emergency medical services for civil rights and peace movement workers in the South. He was also affiliated with the New York labor movement, working for many years as a security plan panel physician for District Council 65. In 1967, the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade marked their 30th anniversary with a tribute honoring Barsky's achievements on behalf the Spanish Republic. Barsky continued his professional relationship with Beth Israel Hospital throughout the remainder of his life, serving as consulting surgeon in his later years. On February 11, 1975, Edward Barsky died at the age of 78. - Biography courtesy of Tamiment Library, NYU.

## BARSKY, 10 OTHERS IMPRISONED APART

### Anti-Fascist Committee Group, Sentenced for Contempt, Sent to Six Federal Institutions

By LEWIS WOOD

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, July 6—Dr. Edward K. Barsky, Howard Fast, the novelist, and nine other members of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee have now been scattered through six Federal prisons.

Sentenced here June 7 for contempt of Congress for refusing to give information to the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the eleven have started serving time in different institutions.

There have been theories that the Government considered it the best policy to split the prisoners, but officials deny that this was a controlling factor. On the contrary, it was stated, the transfer to various Federal penitentiaries was based on where they would be best suited, utilized "and adjusted," and, after all, where the Government believed it proper for them to be. All are from New York City.

It is possible that the ten Hollywood writers, directors and producers, recently sentenced also for contempt of Congress, also may soon be separated. However, as they may submit appeals, their disposition is yet a question. All ten are now in the District of Columbia jail.

#### Barsky Put in Penitentiary

Of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee members, Dr. Barsky, the chairman, has been sent to the Federal Reformatory at Petersburg, Va. Mr. Fast is in the Federal prison camp at Mill Point, W. Va., along with Lyman R. Bradley.

Dr. Jacob Auslander is in the Federal Correctional Institution at Danbury, Conn. Dr. Louis Miller and Manuel Magana are held at Federal detention headquarters in New York City.

The three women members of the committee, Mrs. Marjorie Chodorov, Mrs. Ruth Leider and Mrs. Charlotte Stern, have been taken to the Federal Reformatory at Alderson, W. Va. Harry M. Justiz and James Lustig, last of the eleven, are imprisoned at the Federal Correctional Institution at Ashland, Ky.

When sentenced here by Federal Judge Richmond B. Keech, a month ago, the prisoners were removed by United States marshals to the District Jail. Dr. Barsky was sentenced to serve six months and pay \$500. The rest received three months each, and a \$500 fine.

#### First Convicted 3 Years Ago

The men and women were first convicted more than three years ago, for declining to give records of their organization to the House committee. Eventually the Supreme Court rejected their pleas for an upset of this result.

Their organization has been denounced by the Department of Justice, and the House committee, as a subversive movement and a Communist front. They, however, said that its primary purpose was to help "liberal" refugees from the Spanish civil war.

They asserted that they were victims of a Federal Government attempt to aid Fascist Spain in the "cold war." Pickets protesting their convictions paraded past the White House with placards.

**The New York Times**

Published: July 7, 1950

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*In September 1954, the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade (VALB) were brought before the Subversive Activities Control Board (SACB) in response to a petition by US Attorney General Herbert Brownell to classify VALB as a subversive organization.*

*On September 15 and 16, 1954, Crawford Morgan, an African-American veteran of the Spanish Civil War, gave the following testimony:*

## **Crawford Morgan testifies before the Subversive Activities Control Board**

**SACB: Did you have any understanding, Mr. Morgan, before you went to Spain, of what the issues were connected to that war?**

Morgan: I felt that I had a pretty good idea of what fascism was and most of its ramifications. Being aware of what the Fascist Italian government did to the Ethiopians, and also the way that I and all the rest of the Negroes in this country have been treated ever since slavery, I figured I had a pretty good idea of what fascism was.

We have quite a few fascist tendencies in this country. Didn't come to the point of taking up arms and killing a lot of people, but for the longest time Negroes have been getting lynched in this country by mobs, and that was fascism on a small scale.

But over there [in Spain] it was one whole big group against the other. It was the Franco group that didn't like democracy. And they rebelled against the people after the 1936 elections and tried to stick their ideas down the throats of the freedom-loving people of Spain. So I, being a Negro, and all of the stuff that I have had to take in this country, I had a pretty good idea of what fascism was and I didn't want no part of it. I got a chance to fight it there with bullets and I went there and fought it with bullets. If I get a chance to fight it with bullets again, I will fight it with bullets again.

**SACB: Mr. Morgan, were those thoughts in your mind before you went to Spain?**

Morgan: Ever since I have been big enough to understand things I have rebelled. As a small child of three or four years old I would rebel at human injustice in the way I understood it at that age. And as long as I have been able to remember, up until now, the government and a lot of people have treated me as a second-class citizen. I am 43 years old, and all my life I have been treated as a second-class citizen, and naturally if you always have been treated like one you start feeling it at a very tender age.

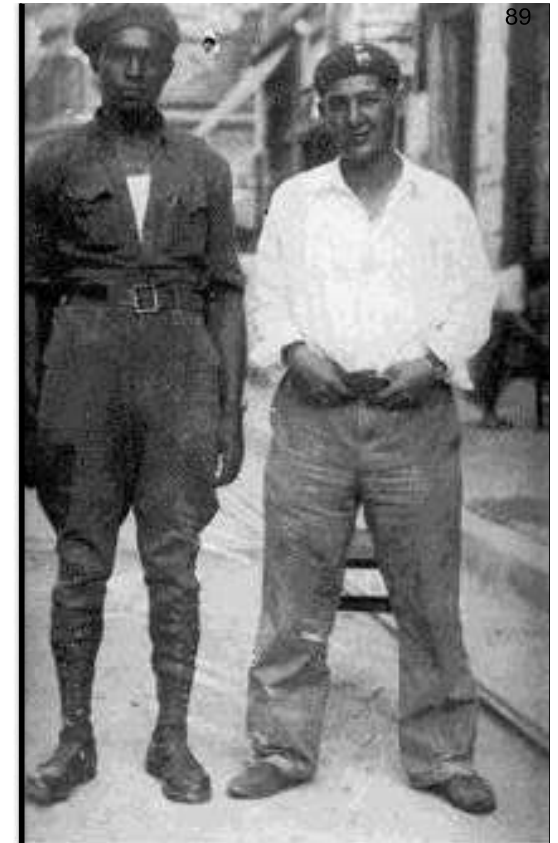
With Hitler on the march, and fascism starting the fight in Spain, I felt that it could serve two purposes: I felt that if we could lick the Fascists in Spain, I felt that in the trend of things it would offset a bloodbath later. I felt that if we didn't lick Franco and stop fascism there, it would spread over lots of the world. And it is bad enough for white people to live under fascism, those of the white people that like freedom and democracy. But Negroes couldn't live under it. They would be wiped out.

**SACB: Were you aware, at any time, that you were a member of the International Brigades, of receiving any different treatment because of your race?**

Morgan: No, from the time I arrived in Spain until after the time I left, for that period of my life, I felt like a human being, like a man. People didn't look at me with hatred in their eyes because I was black, and I wasn't refused this or refused that because I was black. I was treated like all the rest of the people were treated, and when you have been in the world for quite a long time and have been treated worse than people treat their dogs, it is quite a nice feeling to go someplace and feel like a human being.

**Crawford Morgan** was born November 4, 1910 in Rockingham, North Carolina. While still a child, he moved with his family to Norfolk, Virginia where he attended high school. After graduation, Morgan studied to become a printer. In 1932, he joined the Young Communist League. During the Depression he became involved in organizations of the unemployed in New York and was on one occasion arrested in a demonstration at the Home Relief Bureau. On March 10, 1937 Morgan boarded the Washington bound for France. In Spain he was assigned to the infantry attached to the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion and later transferred to the Lincoln-Washington Battalion. His battalion went into action at the end of August 1937 on the Aragon front and Morgan received a leg wound storming the town of Quinto. After recovery, Morgan rejoined the Lincoln-Washington Battalion's Third Company. This was shortly after the action at Fuentes de Ebro in October 1937.

Complications from his leg wound resulted in his transfer to the 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade's Transport Unit where Morgan remained for the remainder of the war. Morgan returned from Spain, on the *Paris*, on December 15, 1938. In August 1942 Morgan enlisted in the US. Army and served in an all-black unit, until May 1946. After leaving the army Morgan resided in Norfolk, Virginia and worked as a truck driver until 1949. He later returned to New York and became an offset printer. On September 15 and 16, 1954, Morgan testified at length on behalf of VALB in hearings before the Subversive Activities Control Board (SACB) of the US Department of Justice. The SACB was in the process of declaring the VALB to be a subversive organization. VALB (Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade) attorney called Morgan as a defense witness. Morgan remained an active member of the VALB. In the early 1970's, he worked with the group's Historical Commission to gather information on other African American volunteers. Morgan died on August 27, 1976.



Morgan (L) with fellow volunteer Kenneth Brown (R)



(L-R) Morgan, Leo Markowitz, Eric Parker, Langston Hughes



## Award (A Gold Watch to the FBI Man Who Has Followed Me for 25 Years)

By Ray Durem



Well, old spy  
looks like I  
led you down some pretty blind alleys,  
took you on several trips to Mexico,  
fishing in the high Sierras,  
jazz at the Philharmonic.  
You've watched me all your life,  
I've clothed your wife,  
put your two sons through college,  
what good has it done?  
the sun keeps rising every morning.  
ever see me buy an Assistant President?  
or close a school?  
or lend money to Trujillo?  
ever catch me rigging airplane prices?  
I bought some after-hours whiskey in L.A.  
but the Chief got his pay.  
I ain't killed no Koreans  
or fourteen-year old boys in Mississippi.  
neither did I bomb Guatemala,  
or lend guns to shoot Algerians.

I admit I took a Negro child  
to a white rest room in Texas,  
but she was my daughter, only three,  
who had to pee...  
and I just didn't know what to do,  
Would you?  
see, I'm so light, it just don't seem right  
to go to the colored rest room;  
my daughter's brown and folks frown on that  
in Texas,  
I just don't know how to go to the bathroom  
in the free world!

Now old FBI man,  
you've done the best that you can,  
you lost me a few jobs,  
scared a couple of landlords,  
You got me struggling for that bread,  
but I ain't dead.  
and before it's all through,  
I may be following you!

Born in 1915 in Seattle, Washington, **Ramon Durem** left home at 14 and joined the Navy. Discharged following an injury to his leg, Durem worked as a laborer along the West Coast. He eventually enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley and joined the Communist party in 1931. Active in various radical causes on campus, Durem was arrested for picketing against silk imports from Japan. Durem left for Europe, aboard the *Aquitania*, on March 31, 1937. During the Brunete Offensive, an enemy bullet struck Durem in the same leg that had been injured in the Navy. While recuperating at the American base hospital at Villa Paz, Durem met, courted and married a nurse from Brooklyn, Rebecca Schulman. In the summer of 1938 when the front lines broke and the hospital had to be evacuated, Durem returned to the 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade and served throughout the remainder of the Retreats and the Ebro Offensive. Durem was among the Americans who participated in the farewell parade in Barcelona and returned to the United States aboard the *Ausonia* on December 20, 1938. Durem and Shulman moved to Los Angeles where they had three daughters. Durem continued to be an active union organizer and was arrested on a number of occasions. During the 1940s Durem discovered an African American identity. He separated from his wife, remarried— this time to an African American woman— and moved his new family to Guadalajara, Mexico in order to escape government harassment. In 1962 Durem and his family returned to reside in L.A. In the late 1940s Durem began writing poetry under the name of "Ray Durem." His poems were first published in the *Crusader*, a journal edited by Robert Williams, the Black Nationalist leader who in the 1960s was forced into exile in Cuba and China. Other poems were published in the literary journals *Phylon* and *Venture* and in the *Herald Dispatch* newspaper. Durem's early poems attracted the interest of Langston Hughes, and in the mid-1950s Hughes tried unsuccessfully to help Durem secure a publisher. Hughes did include one of Durem's poems in the anthology *New Negro Poets: USA*. In the early 1960s Durem saw selections of his poetry published in the *Heritage Anthology Sixes and Sevens* and in the magazine *Umbra 2*. In 1963, at the age of 48, Ray Durem died of cancer in Los Angeles. A volume of Durem's poetry entitled *Take No Prisoners* (1971) was published in London posthumously.

# Snapshots of FBI Report on Ray Durem...

## FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1  
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA** L. A. FILE NO. **61-374**

REPORT MADE AT <b>LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>2-10-40</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>10-27-39; 1-6-40</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>A. D. HOPE hlk</b>
TITLE <b>RAYMON DUREM</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES</b>

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

Information furnished that Subject DUREM, who fought two years in Spain with Loyalist forces, was formerly employed by State Relief Administration, Bakersfield, Calif., as case worker. Was employed on W.P.A., Bakersfield. Is an anarchist and Communist and preaches subversive doctrine among migrants and recipients of relief. Nationalistic tendency cards submitted.

**Details:**

On October 27, 1939, JAMES V. GRAYSON, Assistant Chief of Police, Bakersfield, California, an FBI National Police Academy graduate, invited agent to accompany him to a conference regarding espionage activities in the vicinity of Bakersfield with E. R. HUBBARD, Director of the Kern County Work Relief Department, P. O. Box 312, Bakersfield, telephone 2915, and VERN AUSTIN, Petroleum Engineer with the California Division of Oil and Gas, 1101 Golden State Highway, Bakersfield, California, who is also a Major in the Cavalry Reserve and Commanding Officer of the Bakersfield Mobilization Center.

These gentlemen advised that RAYMON DUREM fought for two years in Spain with the Loyalist forces; that he is an anarchist; that through pull with the State administration, DUREM obtained a

APPROVED AND FORWARDED <i>A. B. Wood</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE <i>W</i>	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES
COPIES OF THIS REPORT 3 Bureau 3 S.F.I., San Diego 3 O.A.I., Fresno 3 O.A.I., Fort Worth 3 Los Angeles		100-18549-1 FEB 19 1940 FEB 15 1940

[Page 2 of 312-page FBI report]

LA 61-374

**Notion Activity:**

T-4 advised that DUREM on his visit to Mexico in the fall of 1950 did nothing except drink beer, loaf in the swimming pool, and there was no reason to believe that he was engaged in any Communist activity. T-4 further stated that during October, 1950, RAYMON DUREM visited CARLOS SANCHEZ (CARDENAS), local leader of an offshoot group of the Communist Party of Mexico, at which time he advised SANCHEZ that he was sympathetic with SANCHEZ's movement because the same type of thing had happened to him in the United States, and it was time the Communist Party got leaders who were correct in their philosophy and forceful in their action.

During December, 1950, T-5 advised that DUREM left Los Angeles to spend the Christmas holidays at Guaymas, Mexico. T-5 advised that during his stay in Guaymas DUREM again appeared to be merely on a vacation but in conversation with T-5 advised that he is very active with the Negro groups in the United States and gave the impression that he is doing important work. T-5 advised that DUREM again was critical of the Communist Party leaders in the United States, stating that almost all of them were guilty of personal opportunism and stated that even WALTER WINSTON has recently shown this trait because he has failed to support recent strikes of his men in an effort to be on good terms with the American Government.

T-6 advised that ERIC STOKMAR, who was referred to as the person in charge of the Mexico City headquarters of the group, is presently estranged from DUREM and desires the manner of living of such alleged radicals as the subject who she regards as cynics who are of little or no use to the laboring man.

T-1 in April, 1951, advised that on April 22, 1951, subject left Los Angeles for Guaymas and returned to Los Angeles on May 4, 1951. Again T-1 advised that this visit was apparently entirely social in nature, and that no information has come to his attention of any subversive activity with reference to DUREM and the trip. The apparent reason for the trip was a visit with his family and an opportunity to relax inexpensively.

P E N D I N G

-5-

IN 6425 DocId:59161818 Page 220

DUREM, RAYMON  
127 or 129 E. 25th Street  
Los Angeles, California 9-6-40

ANARCHIST

Fought for two years with Spanish Loyalist forces. An anarchist. Formerly a case worker on S. R.A. and while so engaged he preached subversive doctrine among migrants and recipients of relief. (M. V. Grayson, M.P.A.; H.H. Hubbard, Director, Kern County Relief Dept., Bakersfield, Calif.; 61-7560-5227).

[Page 10 of 312-page FBI report]