



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Pamphlet: This Is My Husband: Fighter for His People, Political Refugee

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The Ford Workers

From Louisiana in 1947, we moved to Detroit. In the same year our second daughter, Kathryn Alice, was born. My husband became a leader of the Communist auto workers at the great Ford plant. The Communists were an important factor in the leadership of the big struggles of the Ford workers against the man-killing speedup, Jim Crow employment and job classification policies; and, in behalf of unity and democracy within the labor unions.

The militant Ford workers have become an outstanding element in the ever growing resistance movement of the American people against the efforts of a Big Business-dominated government to scrap the Constitution, junk all democratic processes, and impose an open fascist rule upon the country.

In 1949 my husband became Southern Regional Director of the Communist Party and in the following year, an alternate member of its National Committee. Once again he returned to the area of his birth - the region and the people of this country whom he loves above all others - as a leader of workers and farmers - as a Communist leader.

It was not for long that my husband and his comrades were to be able to go about their work in relative peace. The power-hungry monopolists in our country became frustrated and enraged by the world-wide resistance of the organized will of hundreds of millions of people to their program for world domination. They struck a cowardly and vengeful blow at the Communist Party and their leaders. Eleven leaders were indicted under the provisions of the Smith Act. They were railroaded through a trial based on the evidence of paid informers, and imprisoned. In its garroting of the Constitutional rights of those Communist leaders, the government impaled the democratic rights of all Americans of whatever political persuasion.

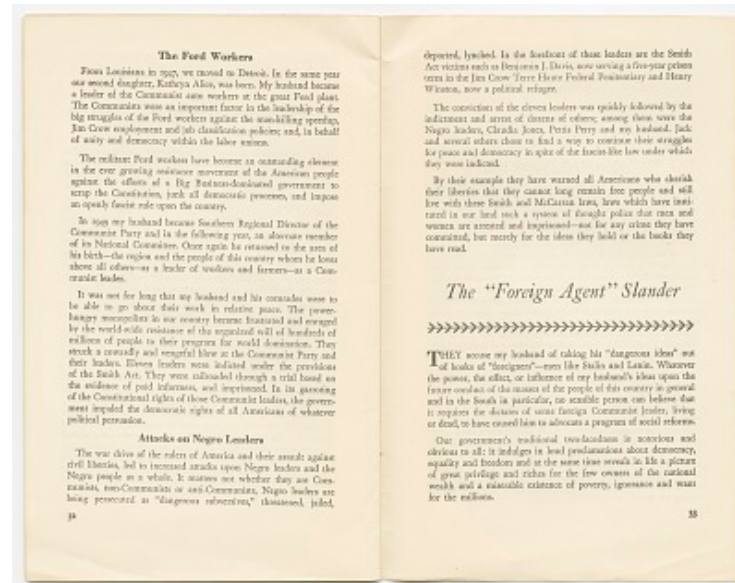
Attacks on Negro Leaders

The war drive of the rulers of America and their assault against civil liberties, led to increased attacks upon Negro leaders and the Negro people as a whole. It matters not whether they are Communists, non-Communists or anti-Communists, Negro leaders are being persecuted as "dangerous subversives," threatened, jailed,

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deported, lynched. In the forefront of these leaders are the Smith Act victims such as Benjamin J. Davis, now serving a five-year prison term in the Jim Crow Terre Haute Federal Penitentiary and Henry Winston, now a political refugee.

The conviction of the eleven leaders was quickly followed by the indictment and arrest of dozens of others; among them were the Negro leaders, Claudia Jones, Pettis Perry and my husband. Jack and several others chose to find a way to continue their struggles for peace and democracy in spite of the fascist-like law under which they were indicted.



By their example they have warned all Americans who cherish their liberties that they cannot long remain free people and still live with these Smith and McCarran laws, laws which have instituted in our land such a system of thought police that men and women are arrested and imprisoned - not for any crime they have committed, but merely for the ideas they hold or the books they have read.

The "Foreign Agent" Slander
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THEY accuse my husband of taking his "dangerous ideas" out of books of "foreigners" - men like Stalin and Lenin. Whatever the power, the effect, or influence of my husband's ideas upon the future conduct of the masses of the people of this country in general and in the South in particular, no sensible person can believe that it requires the dictates of some foreign Communist leader, living or dead, to have caused him to advocate a program of social reforms.

Our government's traditional two-facedness is notorious and obvious to all: it indulges in loud proclamations about democracy, equality and freedom and at the same time reveals in life a picture of great privilege and riches for the few owners of the national wealth and a miserable existence of poverty, ignorance and want for the millions.

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