



Half the World

by Claudia Jones

ALL THE MODERN MEANS of communication will be geared on this Mothers Day, 1951, to eulogizing American mothers. But, with very few exceptions, none will voice the real desires on the minds, hearts and lips of mothers in our own country and throughout the world for lasting peace.

Indeed, it is a hallmark of our capitalist society that mothers are "honored" on only one day of the year, while for millions of working class mothers their year-round lot is anything but tribute.

On the eve of this Mothers Day, three American mothers were forced together with fathers of American GIs to abduct their soldier sons from army camps because of lack of medical treatment.

Almost a week before the anniversary of Mothers Day the heroic wife and four children of William McGee, Negro World War II veteran scheduled to die in Mississippi's electric chair for the false charge of "rape,"

must have pondered the significance of the cheap tributes to American mothers on radio, press and television. To Mrs. Rosenberg, mother of two children, sentenced in an unprecedented peace time death verdict in a so-called spy trial surrounded by war hysteria, the same thought undoubtedly occurs. Thousands of mothers in working class homes and lower income families who must scrape and stint in order to meet exorbitant prices on milk, meat and bread know the falsity of these tributes.

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IN DIRECT CONTRAST to the true origin of this day (elsewhere indicated on Woman Today Page) as a day of tribute to the peaceful desires of American women, was a broadcast I recently heard by Kate Smith. Essence of her remarks in "tribute" to American mothers was that mothers to whom is given the task of taking care of home and family, of nursing the wounds of life, should be honored on this day. It is fitting to ask: why should women and mothers nurse the wounds of life and not live in peace, rear their children to happy manhood and womanhood? Such would be the greatest tribute to mothers who as creators of life, revere life and want peace and a happy life for all children.

Of course, the so-called "tributes" of Kate Smith and other bourgeois ideologists are designed to make women accept a program of world war and fascism. On this day reactionary ideologists will either make empty tributes unrelated to life and the problems of women and the family, or will try to make women accept the Truman-MacArthur plan for World War III (in Europe or Asia) to save "free enterprise" and "Western Civilization."

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WHAT STAKE do American mothers have in these "goals?" The only stake they have is more suffering, death and destruction for their sons and husbands, over 60,000 of whom have been maimed, killed and wounded in the Wall Street Korean adventure. Moreover, women are learning that to protect their children from A-bomb psychology now being pumped for in the nation's schools, it is necessary to fight for peace, and the basic needs of their families. Millions of working class and Negro mothers are learning that the sham bourgeois democracy of Western civilization bars them from participation in social and public life, perpetuates the "Theories of women's social inferiority," unequal pay for equal work, their exclusion from elementary human and social rights. They will also learn that intimidation of their minds by the reactionary hierarchy of the Church, threats and persecution of their democratic organizations go hand in hand with the drive for world war, death and destruction.

It is of the greatest significance that on this Mothers Day, ever growing thousands of women in our country cutting across all strata, are voicing the truth that peace does not wait on us, that it must be won. In their demands for ending the war in Korea now, by peaceful negotiation of the big five powers including People's China, by speaking up against the bombing of China, for an overall big five power peace pact, etc., they give the lie to any complacency by reaction that women are in the camp of war and reaction. Let all labor-progressive forces by their support to the peace efforts of women, and the women themselves dedicate themselves on this Mothers Day to the strengthening of the peace struggle. This, after all, will be the best tribute to the mothers of our land!

