

# Drama, Song, Dance at Peace Festival May 28

Rarely, if ever, have the American people themselves written the script of a play or festival which speaks of their own hopes and aspirations.

The bloodhounds of America culture have usurped for themselves the role of the Big Liars in order to hide the people's will to win the peace.

But America's voices for peace will be heard.

Letters from parents, sweethearts, GIs in Korea written to the newspapers and in personal correspondence will be included in the original script of the Peace Festival to be held next Wednesday, May 28, at St. Nicholas Arena, 66th St. and Columbus Ave.

The entire cultural evening's program of songs, dances and poems will be devoted to the voices of peoples everywhere working for a stable world.

The tabloid with musical background will offer authentic material from the four corners of the world.

Sponsored by the Ameri-



JULIAN MAYFIELD

can Peace Crusade and New York Peace Institute, the Festival will be a sharp contrast to the white supremacist program offered in Paris under State Department supervision. Negro and white artists have joined in the Peace Festival showing world solidarity for peace.

Even the French press has reported the French public's disdain for Acheson's warmongering culture.



BEULAH RICHARDSON

Acheson and his masters are trying vainly to keep from the people the growing chorus for peace and the newborn works of art which it is creating.

UN representatives have been invited to attend the Festival whose script has been prepared by Yvonne Gregory. Julian Mayfield and Michael Lewin are co-directors with Joseph Sanders as producer.

Special boxes at the Arena



MICHAEL LEWIN

have also been reserved for leaders and active workers of the peace movement.

Pablo Neruda's prize-winning poem, "Let the Railsplitter Awake" will be dramatized by actor Lloyd Gough.

There will be a dramatic portrayal by Lorraine Hansberry, actress and poet, who was a delegate to the Montevideo Inter - Continental Peace Congress.

There will be an extravaganza with four choral groups in a spectacular "Mothers' Peace Cantata" composed by Rayna Hayim, who recently was with the Federation Populaire de Musique. The beautiful voice of Nadyne Brewer will accompany the cantata.

Dances from the Far East, with native costumes will be presented.

The delicate and sensitive dances of India and China will be presented by the noted artists, Gina and Chai Li Chee.

American square and Israeli dances will be performed by members of the New York Dance Workshop.

The entire program will be highlighted by the people's yearning for peace—the desire for a five-power peace pact.

The tickets are \$1.20 and \$1.50 with some at \$2.40. They can be acquired from the American Peace Crusade, 125 W. 72 Street, and at the Jefferson Bookshop and Bookfair.

## WHITTAKER CHAMBERS — 'WITNESS' FOR WAR AND FASCISM

**WITNESS.** By Whittaker Chambers. Random House. New York. 808 pp. \$5.

By ROBERT FRIEDMAN

"Witness," in the context of this 808-page alibi by Whittaker Chambers, is a self-serving synonym for the cruder but accurate, "police-informer." There are two purposes which this book by the notorious finger-man is intended to serve. He has his own axe to grind. He wants to crawl out of the mud to which his own greed and hatred for the working class has brought him, and to convince the American people that it was a love for God and country which led him to the most despised profession known to man.

Not police-informer but patriot and man of God. That is the conception of himself Chambers wants to sell.

But will the American people buy? The answer for the decent, democratic majority is not likely to be 'Yes.'

For we Americans recognize the brand of Cain and the stink of Judas. And a Whittaker Chambers who got fat and wealthy from his career—a \$30,000 a year editor's job with Henry Luce, a country estate, and now the lush profits from a Saturday Evening Post serialization and Book of the Month Club selection of his book—who can believe in a man for whom informing has so nicely paid?

But this volume has another purpose, more significant than the personal fate of one informer. It is to carry out the propaganda drive, begun in the Alger Hiss trial and developed in all the various aspects of the anti-Communist witchhunt, to convince the American people that the New Deal was a product of a conspiracy of "Soviet agents."

This is how it is done: A renegade Communist, Chambers writes in detail about the people he knew as Communists. He writes in detail about his

own personal family history. This establishes him, presumably, as a writer of fact, not fiction. But, interlarded with these sections of his book are the familiar, uncorroborated fancies about "Soviet spy rings" in Washington of which he allegedly was a leading figure. And the whole thing is done in such a way as to lend credence to those portions of Chambers' story which rest solely on his unsupported testimony.

Because there were what Chambers (and the whole McCarthyite cabal) call "Communists" in high places in government during the Roosevelt era, the public is supposed to believe that the New Deal was really a "revolution." Socialism is in disguise, instead of a series of concessions wrested from a reluctant capitalist class by a resurgent people. The public is supposed to believe that the U. S. fought the wrong enemy in World War II, all because of this non-existent "Soviet" ring in Washington.

In other words, what is desired by the men manipulating Chambers is a re-writing of past history to justify their drive toward fascism at home and a world war. The hoped-for effect of such a book is to immobilize Americans from any democratic struggle for their rights for fear that what they believe to be liberal and progressive is really "Communist."

Thus Chambers boasts that, in the midst of World War II, as an editor of Time Magazine, he was busy "making it clear . . . that Russia was not a friend but an 'enemy.' This is what Hitler was doing. The inescapable conclusion is that Nazi Germany should have been our ally in a coalition war to destroy the Soviet Union.

That, of course, is the current program of Chambers' masters. And all of the "spy" baloney is merely a cover-up for this program and a weapon to intimidate the majority of Americans from expressing their opposition to any such senseless war against the Soviet Union.



WHITTAKER CHAMBERS

Few readers of "Witness" will reach page 539. Those who do will discover that, to the police-informer, Rep. John Rankin of Mississippi is a "friendly and gracious" man.

Millions of Americans will need nothing more as evidence of the real character of a man who thus extols the foulest-mouthed reviler of the Negro and Jewish peoples ever to disgrace the U. S. Congress by his presence.

But long before most readers of "Witness" quit of mingled exhaustion and disgust they will have learned the measure of this man who loves the Dixiecrat Rankin; who lauds as a "good friend" the sponsor of concentration camp legislation, Sen. Nixon; who pictures the unspeakable Un-American Committee as patient, long-suffering patriots; who patronizingly speaks of a "colored maid" and glorifies himself for deigning to sit at the same dinner table with a Negro woman.

It must have seemed like a slick scheme to sandwich in Chambers' personal biography between his 'spy' fantasies. No reader, the hope must have been, could doubt the veracity of a man so painfully frank about himself and his family.

Yet, even in the smallest personal details, the informer is suspect. Long Island newspapers have incredulously greeted, for instance, Chambers' account of having heard the surf on the beaches "seven miles away." One columnist even advertised publicly for Lynbrook, Long Islanders who had ever duplicated Chambers' feat.

But it is to the sordid details of Chambers' family life that most normal Americans will react most violently.

How is one to believe a man who writes "For defense, I bought a long sheath knife. . . I bought it chiefly with my lonely walks with Bykov and my automobile rides with other Communists in mind," when it is Communists who are persecuted and failed, and Chambers, the self-described 'victim,' who flourished on the profits from his fingering?

But long before Chambers began to spin his spy fantasies, he himself testified: "Soon my mother took to keeping an axe in the closet. . . In that somewhat uneasy atmosphere, I began to take a knife to bed with me."

This sickly and sickening atmosphere which Chambers breathed, and of which he writes almost boastfully, will repel normal Americans:

"I realized then that my grandmother Whittaker was insane."

" . . . my brother, began to tell me, for everyone to hear, what he thought about our family. He shouted that our mother and father had ruined their own lives . . . and then dismissed them with a foul expression. I picked up a tumbler of whiskey and threw it in his face."

"My father . . . was pummeling my brother's face which was streaming with blood. . . I struck at my father. My brother slid to the floor and lay there prone. Above him, my father and I wrestled and fought. Finally I flung him against a cabinet." We quote the foregoing, not to gloat over a family's misfortunes, but rather to indicate the moral

climate in which this informer finds himself most at home.

And this is the new hero the witchhunters would offer the American people.

One need not be an adherent of a religious faith himself to reject as an obscene farce the attempt of this vainglorious mountebank to sell himself as a Divinely-inspired prophet to the American people.

"The Communist vision," he alleges, "is the vision of man without God." And so, a 'holy war' to cost millions of lives, must be waged. Among the things to be fought and destroyed, he lists modern science, nationalism the Protestant Reformation and Socialism.

But millions of Americans are already rejecting such a war as they have already condemned its rehearsal in Korea. And, increasingly, they will see the treacherous and evil nature of the Big Lie about communism to which Chambers and other renegades and professional informers have so eagerly lent themselves.

Of his first day in school as a boy, Chambers confesses, "I developed a deep distrust of the human race."

The Communists he maligns, on the other hand, never falter in their confidence in the American people that they will find the way to lasting peace and to a better life under socialism.

It is clear that the men who plan out the propaganda for war and fascism in this country have high hopes for Witness. All the stops have been pulled out for this book, which was serialized in part in the Saturday Evening Post before publication, which has been named a selection of the Book of the Month Club, and for which the publisher, Random House, is spending \$30,000 in advertising alone.

The exploitation of this profoundly un-American book marks a sinister step-up in Big Business' efforts to sell police-spying and thought control to the American people.