

HANDS ACROSS THE SEA

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The shadow of the madman who is the symbol of terror and oppression to millions of justice loving people in every corner of the world, hovers over the lives and freedom of thousands of men and women.

Its blackest fury is ready to be unleashed this month against one man who has been hidden away from the world in the dungeons of Moabit prison in Berlin since March, 1933. He is the

July, when his ship, the S. S. Manhattan, was sailing up the river Elbe to Hamburg, three Nazi secret police got aboard and after a whispered conference with the captain, broke open the locker which held Lawrence Simpson's personal possessions. They hunted until they found a cigarette box filled with stickers denouncing Hitler terror. When the ship docked at Hamburg they were joined by a fourth of their kind and they carried Simpson off with them. Cool, unadorned kidnaping of an American citizen in direct violation of every tenet of international law.

Lawrence Simpson is today in one of Hitler's concentration camps, hidden and guarded, another of the tens of thousands of victims at the mercy of Hitler's murder hordes.

The third man over whom the shadow of the swastika hangs is Edward Drolette. Drolette like hundreds of other American seamen, knew of and was infuriated by the treatment of Lawrence Simpson. Like thousands of American people he knew and abhorred what fascist terror is doing to Ernst

bolize the anti-fascist, anti-Nazi sentiment of millions.

Hitler thought that by throwing Thaelmann into a dungeon and hiding him from the world, he would succeed in causing him to be forgotten. He was mistaken. Hitler thought, that by sending his agents to kidnap Lawrence Simpson, he would stop anti-Nazi agitation and sentiment among American seamen. Hitler thought that his demands for apology to the U. S. State Department—demands which were promptly met—would clap all six of those arrested on the Bremen into jail for good. He was mistaken again.

It was one force, one power that foiled Hitler in each case. It was the might of mass pressure. Hundreds of thousands of reminders in the form of demonstrations before Nazi consulates, wires, telegrams, delegations to Germany, remind Hitler daily that Thaelmann is not forgotten.

The demonstration on board the S. S. Bremen was a smashing answer that Simpson would not be left to rot in a concentration camp. The delegation of



Ernst Thaelmann

beloved leader of the German working class—a man who is the symbol of the fight against fascism and war—Ernst Thaelmann.

Another whom it threatens is a young American seaman, 34 years old, who sailed the seas to Germany at least 10 times during these same three years. He saw what Hitler terror meant to the German workers. He saw them tortured and oppressed. He knew about the continued imprisonment of Ernst Thaelmann, the gruesome murder of hundreds of the bravest fighters in the ranks of the working class. And though he was a quiet, unassuming, able seaman, Lawrence Simpson did what he could to fight Nazi terror on board the ships he sailed. He talked to his fellow workers. He gave them literature. He told them about Ernst Thaelmann. He opened their eyes to the causes of the misery they saw in every German port. And so, early in



Delegation of seamen led by Anna Damon (left) and June Kroll, Anti-Nazi Federation (right)

Thaelmann and hundreds of thousands of German workers.

Drolette was part of the demonstration which gathered on the docks of New York on the night of July 26 when the S. S. Bremen was to sail for Germany. He was on board the Nazi ship when its murder emblem was torn from the mast and thrown into the waters of New York harbor. Edward Drolette was shot by a detective during the police attack which followed the tearing down of the swastika, critically wounded and arrested.

These three men, thousands of miles apart, separated by stone walls and the Atlantic Ocean, have become symbols not only of fascist terror and oppression—but much more important—they sym-

bolize the anti-fascist, anti-Nazi sentiment of millions.

semen led by the I.L.D. and the Anti-Nazi Federation which called on the State Department in Washington demanding action for the release of Simpson was another forceful reminder. But most important of all was the smashing victory for mass defense won in the release of five of the six seamen held in connection with tearing down the swastika. The I.L.D. mobilized that mass defense. It backed it up with a brilliant battery of defense counsel headed by Congressman Vito Marcantonio. It packed the courtroom to overflowing every single day of that trial.

But the lives and freedom of these men still hangs in the balance. Drolette, out on bail raised by the I.L.D.,

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Hands Across the Sea

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faces a prison sentence for "felonious assault"—in spite of the fact that *he* was shot and wounded. He must be freed. Simpson is still hidden away in a concentration camp. Thaelmann is still in prison facing a trial by ax men sometime in October.

In every city that has a German consulate, the thunder of mass pressure must demand freedom for Ernst Thaelmann. Hitler, arch fiend of fascism, must be made to feel that his swastika is not the banner of millions of justice loving people and that international mass pressure has hands that reach across the sea to defend and protect his victims.
