By JOSEPH NORTH

They will be celebrating William Z. Foster’s 74th birthday in a few days, March 18. Last it was virtually impossible for him to talk about that. But it江县, when the first recorded speech of the Smith Act was not due out of prison March 1. That is what he wanted to talk about.

The man who is regarded by millions of Americans and whose name is known the world over is going to talk about the imminent coup to the people he fought so bravely. Eugene Dennis and his associates are six years in prison, but he said simultaneously is imperative for every understanding worker to remain active in the struggle against the forces of reaction in order to reassert the policies which are under the second amendment of the Smith Act.

"This will be the longest," he said veiledly, "but it will not be the last country of the world. Nobody would let them get away with it if we were to figure out our states with our states."

The man whose work and whose ideas were the trade union and political union to over half a century has stamped him as the foremost labor activity to the land the working-class who will welcome the Smith Act defendants as dauntless crusaders for their cause. "It is not lost time," he said.

Workers understand these matters better than any other individual. "If you want to remain a union member, you have to remain a union member," he said. "If you want to remain a Smith Act victim and suffer are not forgotten."

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The News on February 15, 1957, was much like that on any other day in these strange times: full of good and bad, the one seeming to cancel out the other.

That was the day Sen. Margaret Chase Smith (R-Me) told a Philadelphia audience the sell was in sight for the era of the "pro- fessional demagogues who quoter the America of those who may disagree with them."

And then: "At last long, the shining truth about the false accusers, the half- truth artists, the professional fabricators, the prevaricators-for-pay... it is breaking through the dark and ugly clouds of doubt they have so skillfully blown up."

On that day, Harvey Matson, one of the false accusers, was admitting the "shining truth" in the same Fisby Square court house where he had stood accused of other "pre- varicators-for-pay" -- had led to the seeding innocent men and women to prison, destroy hundreds of reputations, and add thousands of names to the list of those barred from government or private employment.

"It did seem that the "dark and ugly clouds" shrouding America under a spell of illusionism were being lifted. And yet...

On that same Feb. 15, 1957, in a Chicago court room, Classic Lightfoot was sentenced to five years in pri- sion under the law of the word of a few "professional fabricators," who pre- tended to know what goes on in his head.

On Feb. 15, the rift in the cloud of lies noted by Sen. Smith was not yet big enough to let the shining truth open the prison doors, behind which Elizabeth Cueney, Peter Perry, and their comrades were kept in prison, destroy hundreds of reputations, and add thousands of names to the list of those barred from government or private em- ployment.

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These Men Deserve Their Freedom...

"As millions of people have come to realize, this is a historic trial. This is not only because it also involves the political principles, and the inalienable rights of an American workman to better himself, and to improve his lot.

This is to become this trial involves the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the right of freedom of speech, press and assembly and the right to popular liberty and future of all Americans.

From Eugene Dennis' famous speech in the jury at the close of the Foley Square trial of the 11 Communist leaders, October, 1949.

And I can only say, without any thought whatever of defiance of the Court, that as long as I live, your honor, as long as there is breath in my body, I will not cease to demand freedom of speech for myself, freedom of press for the people, freedom of assembly for my fellow Americans, freedom of the press for all people, and of my own people, and I shall fight with all of my strength that steeplechase and Labor, that have been raised to the dignity of professional witnesses to impede unjustly innocent people with the police sword and rigmarole which I will continue my struggle against it. For there reasons I ask your Honor to withdraw this contempt and not to impose it.

From Benjamin J. Davis' statement to the Court after his release.

"I am not willing, or any person, to serve as a committee to demand freedom of speech, press, and assembly for all people, and to ask the Court not to impose this contempt upon me."

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