

Beyond The Square--By Carol Campbell

The Salemite

Letter

"I'll clue you, cats, I just don't dig what blows here lately. You know your old dad, he keeps a pretty sharp ear bent to the notes from the jazz boys and up to now it's really been swingin'. I mean we've done nothin' but rockin' and rollin'. But now and then I been hearing strange sounds. No chuckles, really strange, and this new bit is really square. No heads yet, gang, but you never know."

Well, you're right, my friend. If you listen carefully to the current music in America which has been tainted by the tinny clamor of Presley and Rock and Roll for far too long, you may hear the pure, sweet strains of an old Jamaican folksong. This is the dew-like voice of Harry Belafonte. It is in this young Negro folksinger that I see the greatest salvation for the degeneracy into which our popular music has fallen.

Although Harry Belafonte was born in New York City, the major part of his childhood was spent in the British West Indies among the people of his mother's native homeland. Returning to the United States, he spent a hitch in the Navy and then decided he wanted to be an actor.

Despite his hard work in a New York dramatic school where his colleagues were Marlon Brando and Tony Curtis, the breaks never came so he accepted a crooning position at the Royal Roost singing dreamy American love songs. "I got sick of that 'good-looking boy that girls go for' routine", says Harry, and he opened a restaurant that folded in a few months.

Remembering the folk songs he had heard in his childhood, Harry and guitarist named Millard Thomas combed the Library of Congress to gather folk songs and then began singing. Embellishing the spirituals, folk songs and calypso with good rhythm and a keen sense of the dramatic, he was an immediate hit.

Several of his records were top selling successes and he found rapt audiences all over the nation when he joined Marge and Gower Champion last year to tour in a show entitled "Three for Tonight." His repertoire ranged from the delicate ballads which he seemed to be singing more for himself than the audience to rousing calypso chanted with faultless clarity and an infectious smile.

But overshadowing the tall good looks and the sensitive interpretation is the natural, husky voice of the singer himself. This is what captivates the listener and this is the secret of his magic. Harry Belafonte still carries the dream of becoming an actor.

In 1954 he said, "I guess I'd rather act than be the greatest singer in the world." But to me he has a far greater calling, that of bringing America a high level of music which it has needed for a very long time.

THE WORLD

Last week in Melbourne, Australia the trumpets sounded a parting fanfare, the flag with five interlocking rings was lowered, the torch was extinguished, a cannon roared a final salute and the 1956 Olympiad was brought to a close. Standing before the assembled ranks of athletes from 68 nations and a packed stadium, the President of the International Olympic Committee, Avery Brundage, proclaimed the closing of the games and called upon the youth of all countries to assemble in four years at Rome to celebrate the next games of the Seventeenth Olympiad.

Here are the results of the contests in Melbourne. In first place was Russia with a total of 37 gold medals, in second place the United States with 32, and in third place was Australia with 13. The surprise came with Hungary's failure to capture third place, which had been expected, but the accepted explanation is that the current crisis in this country took the heart out of most of the attempts of the Hungarian athletes.

Our country triumphed in the area of men's track and field events with stars such as Bobby Morrow who won the 100 and 200 meter

dash and the 400 meter relay and Harold Connolly with the hammer throw. Russia won by virtue of its many victories in gymnastics and Greco-Roman wrestling. Its outstanding athlete was trackman Vladimir Kuts.

Third place went to Australia through its victories in swimming. Billy Cuthbert won all seven free style races and Murray Rose kept his title as the world's greatest swimmer by winning the 100 and 200 meter dashes. Just for the record, the United States also scored victories in the woman's high jump, basketball, weight lifting, yachting and in a spectacular struggle with the teams from Canada and Australia, the 8-man crew from Yale carried away the prize in rowing.

In Hungary the Kadar puppet government has made a final attempt to squelch the resistance of the workers of Budapest. Last week came the news that they have declared martial law, dissolved the Workers' Councils and have cut all communication between Hungary and the outside world.

With the acknowledged purpose of driving the Soviet troops from Hungarian soil, the workers have been striking and sabotaging production and have thus hit the Kadar regime where it hurts the most.

Since November 4, the United Nations has adopted six resolutions calling on the Soviet Union to cease its intervention, withdraw its troops, cease deportations of Hungarians into Russia and has repeatedly asked permission to admit U. N. observers into Hungary to organize distribution of U. N. relief and to study the situation. On every count, the Russians have said NO.

THE NATION

As for the refugee problem, there has been much criticism of the Administration for the way in which it has handled our program of relief. We claimed we would offer asylum for 21,500 of the 120,000 Hungarians that have fled over the border into Austria in the last six weeks, but so far we have only taken in a thousand.

In retaliation, Ike announced the establishment of an 'air-lift and sea lift' to bring 21,500 exiles to the U. S. by January 1, but the criticism continues of: 1) packing the exiles into troop planes to bring them to the U. S. while other countries like Canada are trans-shiping them by commercial planes; 2) using Camp Kilmer in New Jersey as a central place to process the immigrants because their first taste of American life should not be that of a military atmosphere.

While Lt. Gen. Raymond Wheeler is working out the problem of cleaning of the debris of sunken ships in the Suez Canal, the statesmen in Washington, Paris and London are attempting to clear up the debris of a broken Western Alliance.

Vice-president Nixon made a major policy address last week calling for an end of recriminations against the British attack of Egypt and praising them for the withdrawal of their troops and John Foster Dulles flew to Paris for a meeting of the N. A. T. O. Council to discuss the British need for oil aid and to send tankers to bring Eastern oil around the Cape of Good Hope.

Meanwhile in the Suez the U. N. E. F. has outnumbered those of the British and French for the first time since the beginning of the Anglo-French withdrawal.

For sixteen years a mysterious twenty five bombs in Manhattan little man has planted more than and airports and has never been theatres, bus station, train stations, grabbed by the arm of the law. Last Sunday he struck again when a bomb went off amidst 1,500 people who sat watching Tolstoy's **War and Peace** in the Brooklyn Paramount Theatre.

Although no deaths have occurred as a result of the explosions, fourteen persons have suffered injuries and Commissioner Kennedy of New York has ordered "the greatest

manhunt in the history of the Police Department."

The latest report on the progress of the struggle for school integration in Clinton, Tenn. is that the Federal Government has at last taken action. So far sixteen persons have been arrested in Clinton for interfering in the Court's decision concerning integration and instigating riots against the twelve Negro students who had entered the local high school. It will be interesting to see what further role the federal government will play in this story of local and state officials versus the Supreme Court.

ENTERTAINMENT

The latest sensation in the theatre world is a fine play by Lillian Hellman and Leonard Bernstein which has been adapted from Voltaire's **Candide**. Most of us have forgotten that besides being a furious pamphleteer and philosopher, Voltaire began his career as a tragic dramatist in the classical tradition of Racine.

Overcoming the author's use of the characters as illustrations of a theory, Bernstein has created a sparkling musical holiday and the **New York Times** calls it "the first musical of the season that has distinction".

Don't miss **The Rainmaker** with Katherine Hepburn and Burt Lancaster and **Anastasia** starring Ingrid Bergman and Yul Brynner—soon to be seen in your neighborhood theatres.

A Real Thing

This is the story of a family. It isn't a dramatic story. It's not even a sad story. But you may like it. It most probably won't make you sing any fewer carols or like Christmas trees any less. It shouldn't. But it may stir something in you. It may give you new feeling this year—or revive an old one.

It was Christmas Eve, but this year it was different. There was the tree—small, but sturdy and very straight and green. And there were the ornaments, and the strings of lights, and the tiny cardboard village snuggled in the paper mountains, covered by the white sheet below.

But tonight Father wasn't there . . . nor was Mother. He had died in early spring, and Mother had taken a job as a waitress in a restaurant to support the family and keep them together. This meant that she must be away from home during the supper hour, and Christmas Eve was no exception.

John was six, and his sister, Carole, was eleven. They had eaten their evening meal—enough and abundance—Mother had seen to that. Now they sat very close to the fire place and talked excitedly about Christmas and Santa and presents and the pageant at the church.

They won't be going to the church, for there was no one to take them. They had their own pageant . . . with a plastic cowboy for Joseph, and a flashlight shining thru a small cushion for the light of the Christ Child. There were Indians for shepherds and real gifts for the wise men. And there were lines, too, for each of the characters, and a beginning and an end to this story of the first Christmas.

Sleep came early for the children and they were already in bed when mother came from work.

But her task was ahead for her for there were presents to be brought from hiding places, and wrappings to be made. Then she slept.

In the morning there was a warm house to waken in, and a bicycle for John . . . a heart-shaped locket with a blue stone in the center and a bracelet to match for Carole . . . and a house coat for Mother.

For dinner there was chicken . . . baked with oyster dressing . . . and mince-meat pie for dessert. There was health . . . family . . . love the real Christmas.

—Mary Archer Blount

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Old Salem Christmas

Even Christmas in Salem's early days was different. Salemites dared not sing "four more days till we get out" for they rarely did get to go home—even for Christmas. A journey home for many of Salem's first boarders entailed many days of strenuous travel. To Greensboro was a day's trip.

However, for these little Salem girls, Christmas was a merry time. They spent many weeks making gifts for their classmates and families. They painted little pictures and wrote gay tunes. They painted china and silk screens. However, most of the gifts were examples of their needlework.

To their little sisters, the Salem-ites would send rag dolls; to their mothers, embroidered purses, or vases; to their fathers, monogrammed handkerchiefs or silk change purses.

It was fun for the girls to make the decorations for their room companies and parlors. They strung pop corn, made tinsels, and many gay ornaments. Salem was decorated as much like home at Christmas as was possible.

Christmas was celebrated with beautiful services in the Home Church. And Salemites never failed to realize the true joy of the season.

The residents of Old Salem were a large part of the Salem boarder's observance of Christmas. The homes were elaborately decorated with greenery. Each house had a crèche the family had made. Long hours were spent in the carving and building of these little nativity scenes.

And, in many families, each year there were new pieces in the scenes. The figures were intricate and very beautiful.

(This elaborate celebration of Christmas in Old Salem homes is the forerunner of the present Candle Tea and Putz.)

Snow often added to the beauty of Old Salem Christmases. Horse-pulled sleighs were numerous. And the Salem girls were often invited by families to ride. The residents also frequently had the boarders in their homes for dinners and other festivities.

Dear Jo,

You asked me to write something about Christmas for the Salemite. But I must confess I cannot do it. I tried. I dug under stacks of paper and programs and pulled out my old yellow legal pad, hoping it would inspire me.

I talked to people and asked what they would say if they were writing about Christmas. I thought, looked, and wondered, and every time I came up with the same answer. I cannot write about Christmas.

Christmas is not a season, a color, or a particular kind of weather — though December, red, and cold are the usual conditions. No Christmas is a feeling—a feeling in the air, in other people, and in yourself. And you know as well as I that the only way to express a feeling is through an incident or character.

And that's where I failed, for I could not think of any single incident or character that would express the feeling of Christmas. You see, something that means Christmas to me is a series of little things that add up to the big whole.

It's coming in from class, dead-tired, and finding a tree in the living room. You drop in the nearest chair and watch until someone comes up and says "Listen, friend, UP! You're going to put at least one icicle on this tree." And you do.

It's shopping with your mother just waiting for her to see something she wants, no matter how expensive, so you can go back and get it for her.

It's picking out a football or doll for a Negro orphan who won't know you gave it to him.

It's being so busy with tests, shopping, decorating, that you can't even sit down, yet you smile all the time. It's singing all the old songs like Silent Night and White Christmas and never being tired of them.

It's walking down Main Street loaded with packages and bumping into at least ten people every block, and swearing you won't go again, and then proudly showing what you've bought to give someone.

Christmas is not Santa Claus, though he is representative of it. It is not the birth of Jesus, though that's the reason for it. What is it? I don't know. It causes smiles, joy, laughter. It makes you happy to spend all your money on gifts for other people. It makes you want to decorate, to admire, to sing.

I cannot express it. I don't know how, and I don't know of an incident that would show it. And so I wrote you this letter to explain why I cannot write the article you asked for.

Sissie.

Tell Me . . .

Will you tell me of Christmas little sparrow, looking for the supper crumbs the mother-housewife forgot to throw to you?

Will you tell me of Christmas dirty puppy, sniffing at the barren salvation army pot hanging on the chair?

Will you tell me of Christmas little black child, holding your mother's hand and watching the white child come out of the store with many packages?

Will you tell me of Christmas ragged florist boy, carrying the great poinsetta up the marble steps?

Will you tell me of Christmas hungry delivery boy, sorting out the fat turkeys?

Will you tell me of Christmas widow mother, looking in the face of your hungry, parentless children?

Will you tell me of Christmas Hungarian orphan?

Will you tell me of Christmas marching soldier of any country thinking of home?

—Mary Brooks Yarborough