

# INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE

*National Office*

112 EAST 19th STREET

::

NEW YORK CITY

HON. VITO MARCANTONIO, PRESIDENT  
WILLIAM L. PATTERSON, VICE-PRESIDENT

January 19, 1942

ANNA DAMON, SECRETARY  
ROBERT W. DUNN, TREASURER

Mr. John Hyde Preston  
c/o John Day  
40 East 49th Street  
New York City

Dear Mr. Preston:

A copy of one of your books is locked up in a cell in the Oklahoma County Jail. It has been there since August 1940. It has become "evidence" of criminal syndicalism in a case now widely known as the "Oklahoma Book Trials." If it isn't in jail--it was burned in a public bonfire in Oklahoma City earlier in August.

The fight for the freedom of the four young people already convicted and sentenced to 10 years and \$5,000 fine each, and for the eight defendants yet to be tried in this case, has gone on continuously since August 1940 and has cost tens of thousands of dollars. It has now reached the stage of appeals to the Oklahoma Criminal Court of Appeals. It must be taken to the United States Supreme Court if necessary. To meet some of these costs, the International Labor Defense, which is handling the legal defense in these cases, and the League of American Writers are running a book sale and auction under the general title--**BOOKS BURNED, BOOKS IN JAIL IN OKLAHOMA and BOOKS STILL FREE--FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE VICTIMS OF THE OKLAHOMA BOOK TRIALS.**

We are asking you to do us the honor of contributing a copy of **THE LIBERALS** inscribed and autographed, to this sale which will be held at the Hotel Piccadilly, West 45th Street, New York City, on the afternoon of February 22, 1942--Washington's birthday.

To have the catalogue in time, it is essential to have your contribution in our office no later than January 25. Will you therefore, as quickly as possible, fill in the enclosed blank.

We know that you agree with us that such outbursts of un-Americanism as the Oklahoma Witch-Hunt must be corrected with greater speed than ever before in the interests of national unity and national defense. Victory for the Bill of Rights in Oklahoma, and freedom for the defendants, will be assured by persistent efforts to "cleanup" the little Hitlers in Oklahoma who do not represent the wishes of the American people. A successful book sale will provide the means for finishing the job.

Yours for victory,

*Vito Marcantonio*

VITO MARCANTONIO, president  
International Labor Defense

*Dashiell Hammett*  
DASHIELL HAMMETT, president  
League of American Writers

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uopwa#16  
enc.

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