

BRONX SLAVE MARKET

'Mrs. Legree' Hires Only on the Street, Always 'Nice Girls'

By MARVEL COOKE

Woolworth's on 170th St. was beginning to feel like home to me. It seemed natural to be standing there with my sister slaves, all of us with paper bags, containing our work clothes, under our arms.

I recognized many of the people who passed. I no longer felt "new."
 - But I was not at peace. Hundreds of years of history weighed upon me.
 I was the slave traded for two truck horses on a Memphis street corner in 1849.
 I was the slave trading my brawn for a pittance on a Bronx street corner in 1949.



A "SLAVE" TRAILS off behind a Bronx housewife after being selected from lineup of workers. Staff Photo

As I stood there waiting to be bought, I lived through a century of indignity.

It was that rainy, muggy day after the two-day Christmas holiday, but there was no holiday cheer in the air. The "paper bag brigade" assembled unwillingly—slowly. These women knew, even better than I, that there would be little trading on the market that day.

I waited with six others one hour—two. Four gave up and left. Then a young couple approached, looked us over, and bargained with the woman next to me. I didn't blame them for not choosing me. She was younger, obviously more fit. She went off trailing behind them.

An Offer of Work

I was alone. I was drenched and my feet were wet. I was about to give up when a little old woman with a bird-like face asked if I wanted a few hours' work.

I let my fellow workers down, for I went off with my new "madam" with a bad verbal contract—75 cents an hour for an undetermined amount of work, knowing only vaguely that there was general cleaning and ironing to do. What that meant in detail, I didn't know.

By the end of the day, I knew very well. Every muscle in my body ached.

On the way to her home on Morris Ave., the little old woman informed me that she had been hiring girls off the street for 20 years and that she'd never been disappointed.

"I've always picked nice girls," she said. "I knew you were nice the minute I laid eyes on you." That pat on the back was worse in a way than a kick in the teeth. "I was almost afraid to ask you to work," she went on. "You look like you belong in an office."

I glanced down at her. Was it in her mind that the old clothing I was wearing was too good for a Negro? I couldn't interpret her expression. She had no nose.

"What's your name?" she asked. "Margo," I answered, quickly selecting a name near enough my own not to be confusing. However, five minutes later she was calling me Margie. By the end of the day, I was Mary, a name that to her mind, I suppose, was more befitting my station.

Her apartment had two rooms and a bath, with the kitchen living in one end of the large living room.

A Good Purchase

She watched while I changed into my work clothes. She seemed to be taking stock of my strength. Without turning, I could almost see her licking her lips. She had bought a strapping big animal.

"First, rinse those clothes and hang them on the drier in the bathroom," she said, pointing to the tub. "And then you can dust the walls down all over the house." She handed me a makeshift wall mop.

There were endless chores. I ironed a man's shirt, four full-length ruffled curtains and a tablecloth. I took the stove apart and gave it a thorough cleaning. I cleaned and scrubbed the refrigerator.

(Continued on Page 21)



RESCUED FROM BLAZE—Mrs. Thomas Kane, unable to walk because of recent leg fracture, is carried from burning apartment at Foughkeepsie by Policeman Frisoni and Fireman Rhodes. She was among 54 routed from their beds by blaze, which caused estimated \$200,000 damage. Her husband, Thomas (rear), follows rescuers. Associated Press Photo

Dewey Doubts Legality, But Signs Rent Bill

Albany, Jan. 10 (AP)—Gov. Dewey today signed a stopgap bill to validate New York City's court-vouided local rent control law, but made it plain he considered the new statute unconstitutional.

The Governor indicated the only reason he signed the measure, following its approval by the Republican-controlled Legislature, was to save New York City tenants from possible rent boosts and evictions. He said he feared that, were it

not for the "validation" of the Sharkey law, "the people of the city might again be left naked before the injuries which the Mayor certifies the federal law would bring upon them."

Dewey said: "The shifting scenes of Federal control, city control, invalidating of city control and new city control presents a grim comedy of errors, of which the people of the city of New York have been made the victims."

He referred to the signed bill as one which "purports" to validate the action of the New York City Council last October. The rent law recently was declared unconstitutional by the Court of Appeals.

Dewey added that the Federal government had argued before the Court of Appeals that even if the state should try to validate the law "it would be unconstitutional as an attempt by the city to set its power above that of the national government."

"There is great force to the argument by the Federal government," Dewey observed. He said he was okaying the measure, which expires May 1, "and its constitutionality can then be properly determined by the (Federal) court."

Dewey said he had directed the Temporary State Commission on Rents to "prepare fundamental legislation on the entire subject of residential rent controls," for consideration before the legislature adjourns in the spring.

Dewey acted a few hours after final approval of the stopgap bill. The senate passed it 37-12 today. The assembly passed it last night, 133-9.

The validating act restores the city's Sharkey rent law, which freezes rents as of last March 1, regardless of federally approved increases.

Opposition Rises To Legal Betting

Strong opposition to Mayor O'Dwyer's proposal for state legalization and control of betting on public sports events mounted yesterday as police mapped plans for stepping up the anti-gambling drive.

Chief Inspector August W. Flath went into a huddle with top police officers at headquarters and reportedly instructed borough heads to select men for possible service as plainclothes police.

The session came after 51 top officials were reshuffled in one of the department's biggest shakeups in years and after it was announced that some of the 300 police assigned to plainclothes duty also would be shifted.

Aside from a few Democrats, legislators in Albany frowned on O'Dwyer's proposal. And Gabriel A. Wechsler, general secretary of the City Fusion Party, said the Mayor was "trying to get out from under a problem rather than to solve it."

Other developments: Councilman Cunningham (D-Bronx) said he would re-introduce next Tuesday a resolution calling on Gov. Dewey and the Legislature to amend the State Constitution which prohibits the city from operating lotteries.

New Jersey authorities, in the face of reports that New York City bookies were scurrying across the Hudson to escape the renewed police drive against gamblers, continued to insist the state was "clean" but declared they were keeping strict vigilance.

Mayor Names Hoover Board

Mayor O'Dwyer yesterday appointed a special 20-member committee, representing business, labor and civic organizations and city officials, to make a comprehensive study of the city government machinery, similar to the Hoover Commission's survey of the Federal government.

The committee, described as non-partisan, is headed by Controller Joseph. Among its members are Benjamin Fielding, secretary, former License Commissioner; Henry Epstein, former state Solicitor General; Charles Frouse, Asst. Corporation Counsel; William Reid, Deputy Mayor; Robert Moses, City Construction Coordinator; Robert Dowling, president of the Citizens' Budget Commission; George Hallett, executive secretary of the Citizens' Union; Dr. Channing Tobias, director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund; Nathan Orbach, department store head; Peter Grimm, real estate operator; and Thomas J. Patterson, budget director.

U. S. Says It Got Coplon Tip By 'Informant'

Attempting to show that information leading to the arrest of Judith Coplon and Valentin A. Gubitchev was obtained through sources other than wire-tapping, a prosecution witness testified yesterday before Federal Judge Sylvester J. Ryan here that first information against the two was obtained from a "confidential informant."

But, FBI Inspector Howard B. Fletcher conceded under examination by Abraham L. Pomerantz, counsel for Gubitchev, a "confidential informant" could mean a wire-tapper. Prosecution objections blocked efforts to pin down the identity of the informant.

Miss Coplon, former Justice Dept. analyst, and Gubitchev, a Soviet engineer under suspension from his job with the United Nations since his arrest last March 4, are accused of conspiracy to commit espionage for Russia.

Their counsel, in the current pre-trial examination, are attempting to have the indictment quashed on the ground that the case stems from wire-tapped evidence, in violation of Federal law. The FBI has conceded it tapped the phones of both defendants.

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Searchlight On Marriage

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loved her. They never let her get away with anything. She always had to eat when they said, and to finish what was on her plate. She had to go to bed exactly when they said. She was never allowed to play with other children on the street or in the park. Judy felt there must be something wrong with her. Her parents didn't think she was like other children.

Then her mother had started to get fat. For a long time Judy didn't understand why.

Then suddenly it dawned on her. Mother was going to have a baby. Her tummy was just like Aunt Mary's had been before cousin Tommy was born.

That was the proof! They did not love her! Else why did they need another baby?

She was not good enough! It was clear already. But there were other signs.

Judy waited for them to tell her about the new baby, but they didn't. Not for a long time.

Not until this secret had been simmering inside of her, for months, keeping her in a turmoil.

They wondered why she had no appetite, why she slept so poorly at night! The vision of this usurper soon to arrive made her gorge rise, kept her tossing on her pillow. How she hated him—or her!

By the time they told, what could she say? (That's why they thought she had taken it fine.)

Then came the morning she awoke to find her mother gone. Everything so mysterious. Father gone, too. And Granny was there.

Granny coming to stay like this spells trouble. There is no mistaking it. Then at breakfast, the news came out!

"You have the cutest little baby brother! Aren't you happy?"

(Happy! I suppose I'm supposed to be happy not to see my Mommy all well.)

(And Daddy gets up earlier than ever so he can get to the hospital before business. And he hasn't been home before my bed time one night this week.)

(I haven't caught even a glimpse of him all week. A lot they all care about me.)

Then, all this excitement in the air. All kinds of packages arriving. The hardest blow of all came yesterday.

(My bed moved out into Martha's room! My room is for the new baby and the nurse! There is my old crib with sides up. Not mine any more. Belongs to the new baby.)

(Everything that was mine, my room, my things, my Mommy and Daddy's time. The love that belongs to me, too. He's got everything.)

When they all came home from the hospital — mother, baby, father and the nurse — Judy had been sent out to the park with Granny.

When she came back and wanted to see her Mommy and the baby she had been shocked (out by the nurse who was bustling around giving everybody orders.)

Finally they had said she could go in to see her Mommy now.

And there lay a pale stranger. Not her Mommy, certainly. Her Mommy was strong and smiling, and rosy-cheeked. What right had this strange lady to take her Mommy's place!

Judy was sorry for crying and carrying on so. But it was really not her fault.

This outburst had been preparing a long time. All the feelings of doubt about herself, all the jealousy of the newcomer, all the feelings of repudiation and misery welled up at once, at the sight of the one they told her was her Mommy.

She couldn't smile at her Mommy or the stranger and

All in the Family

Hanover, Jan. 10 (P)—After 24 years of marriage, a man living in Schwieburg, near here, divorced his wife to marry his mother-in-law, the Hannoverische Presse reported today.

dethronement she had suffered. . . . But this wasn't her Mommy. She was sure of that. It couldn't be. . . .

And yet, of course, it was. This little drama is repeated in thousands of homes which try to "shield" the first-born from the trauma of the newborn child.

It is not only perpetrated by parents, but is compounded by friends and relatives. They walk right past the first born, their arms laden with gifts for the newcomer, their faces wreathed in smiles, their lips cooing love. They even ask "And how's that cute little brother of yours today?"

Mothers who had no concern except for their first born now have to spend countless hours bathing, diapering and feeding the newcomer.

That feeding business especially. Every child finds it hard to give up the mother's breast. It is the first friend and comforter. It is a never-failing source of food and warmth and loving support.

Now a usurper is at the favored spot.

That explains why Judy wanted her milk in a bottle again. Sucking is the way the ones who are really loved get fed.

Judy wet her bed that night. (She had been dry-ever since she was two-and-a-half.)

She also awoke screaming and had to be taken into Daddy's bed. She had had a terrible nightmare. She was fearful all day. Didn't eat enough to satisfy a bird.

All Judy's troubles stem from that wailing, diaper-soaking, breast-sucking, attention-grabbing, love-getting, hateful "darling new brother."

That is why the older child often does strange things, despite a professed great love for the baby. (What else can they say, in this losing battle?)

One child was found practically choking on a clothes-pin. "I thought baby was sick, so I'm taking up his temperature."

Another mysteriously fell out of his crib, another's carriage strangely, toppled over; a third caught his finger in the door. . . . and so on. All "accidents," of course.

These things occur not only in cases like Judy's. Sometimes the parents feel so guilty at having another child that they bend over backward to "square things."

They begin to overprotect, over-indulge, apologize. "We had the baby for you, dear. He's yours." (But don't you dare go near him.)

These problems and their dire promise of potential woe do not have to be.

Parents can learn how to handle this most serious threat in the lives of their Judys and Johns.

They can learn how to give children a feeling of security—of being loved (mainly by really and truly wanting and loving them).

They can introduce the question of a new baby early, perhaps even when they are discussing it themselves.

"We want another baby. You've been so wonderful that we think our family ought to be bigger and have more like you in it. Then you can have someone to play with and teach things to. And the baby can have a big brother (or sister) to look up to and learn from."

Something along these lines. The growth of baby can be an interesting topic to be followed and felt.

Plans can be made together—the shopping, setting up the baby's room. The move can be made long in advance, if really necessary. The hospital visit can be discussed in all its details and planned so that the first born will not feel forsaken.

And there is no reason why he cannot go along on the jaunt to bring mother and baby home.

Daddy can arrange to spend time where he is needed more—not less time.

Relatives and friends can be briefed that presents and attention to the first-born are far more important than to the newcomer.

—who doesn't know the difference anyway.

Then the arrival of the baby would not be such a "palace revolution," and the first-born would not feel dethroned.

Then Judy for her part, could have a healthy start on the road of learning to live together with her brother.

And he would not start in with two strikes against him in his future relations with Judy.

Knowing how to get along with our blood brothers in the family . . . Perhaps, some day . . .

We may learn how really to get along with our blood brothers . . . In all the world.

Tomorrow: School for marriage.

Trial by Newspaper Is Not Trial by Jury

(Continued from Page 5)

constrate possibilities which abstract reasoning denies.

It is the virtue of the Frankfurter opinion that it brings forcibly to public attention in this country the law as applied in England. This law severely restricts the power of press or radio to interfere with fair trial. Yet England is as free a country as the U. S. and a good deal more fair in dealing with the unpopular, the radical and the helpless.

In this country an accused man may sue a paper for libel if it publishes defamatory matter about him before his conviction, but the remedy is often more theoretical than real. The press, by bringing about the conviction, may make it hopeless to bring such a suit.

British More Realistic

In England a newspaper which prints such matter about an accused may be punished for contempt of court. British judges have held that "the public has a right to know . . . everything that has taken place in open court." But they have taken a realistic view of contemporary journalism.

In a recent murder case, the London Daily Mirror ran a sensational spread of text and pictures describing the accused as "a vampire." A decision of the King's Bench described this as "a disgrace to English journalism . . . violating every principle of justice and fair play which it has been the pride of this country to extend to the worst of criminals."

The court ruled quite correctly that this was "not the result of an error of judgment but was done as a matter of policy in pandering to sensationalism for the purpose of increasing the circulation of the newspaper." It sent the editor to jail for three months and fined the paper \$40,000.

British judges have declared themselves "determined that trial by newspaper should not be substituted for trial by jury." American judges would do well to emulate them. Freedom of press does not include the right to libel and ought not to include the right to lynch.

Hiss Psychiatrist Firm

(Continued from Page 5)

The psychiatrist, smiling, said that one isolated incident going into a diagnosis was not enough to establish an opinion, that the sum total of a life history was needed, and that his conclusion on Chambers was an "honest and intelligent" appraisal.

Dr. Binger's cross-examination was interrupted during the afternoon to permit Henrikas Rabinavicius, formerly a Lithuanian diplomat and a U. S. citizen since 1949, to take the stand.

Rabinavicius said that he had heard Mrs. Edele Massing was Gerhart Eisler's wife in the early '30s, say at a party in Eugene, Ore., before the September

Feinberg Decision

(Continued from Page 13)

the concept of freedom and due process of law. It prevents the persecution of the innocent for the beliefs and actions of others . . .

Schneiderman v. United States, 320 U. S. 118 (1943):

" . . . At this point it is appropriate to mention . . . that under our traditions beliefs are personal and not a matter of mere association, and that men in adhering to a political party or to the organization notoriously do not subscribe unqualifiedly to all of its platforms or asserted principles . . ." (page 130)

DeJonge v. Oregon, 299 U. S. 353 (1937):

" . . . The question, if the rights of free speech and peaceable assembly are to be preserved, is not as to the auspices under which the meeting is held but is to its purpose; not as to the relations of the speakers, but whether their utterances transcend the bounds of the freedom of speech which the Constitution protects. If the persons assembling have committed crimes elsewhere, if they have formed or are engaged in a conspiracy against the public peace and order, they may be prosecuted for their crimes or other violation of valid laws. But it is a different matter when the State, instead of prosecuting them for such offenses, seizes upon their participation in a peaceable assembly and a lawful discussion as the basis for a criminal charge."

"We are not called upon to review the findings of the State court as to the objectives of the Communist Party. Notwithstanding those objectives, the defendant still enjoyed his personal right of free speech and to take part in a peaceable assembly, having a lawful purpose, although called by that Party . . ." (page 365)

See also Herndon v. Lowry, 301 U. S. 242 (1936).

Conclusion: The Feinberg Law has been attacked upon grounds other than here, passed upon, but its purpose would be served by further analysis. It suffices to state the conclusion of the court that upon all the grounds which have been considered the legislation has been found to contravene the provisions of the Constitution of the United States and of the State of New York.

In reaching such conclusion, the Court is not, of course, oblivious to the practices of international communism, which have met with such universal and well merited contempt among free men. It is not because they disapproved the evil

thinkers and evil doers of their day less, but because they cherished their democracy more, that the great makers and interpreters of our constitution have so jealously guarded the basic concepts of freedom.

It is no answer to say that this measure is needed to combat the menace of Communism. Small service, indeed, to our democracy, is afforded by emulating the tactics of communism, and by destroying the guarantees of freedom.

Other, more effective means are envisaged by our free institutions, methods of combating excess without destroying essentials. They find expression in the latest of a long series of memorable defenses of civil rights in our highest tribunal:

"Accordingly a function of free speech under our system of government is to invite dispute. It may indeed best serve its high purpose when it induces a condition of unrest, creates dissatisfaction with conditions as they are, or even stirs people to anger. Speech is often provocative and challenging. It may strike at prejudices and preconceptions and have profound unsettling effects as it presses for acceptance of an idea. That is why freedom of speech, though not absolute, is nevertheless protected against censorship or punishment, unless shown likely to produce a clear and present danger of a serious substantive evil that rises far above public inconvenience, annoyance or unrest. There is no room under our Constitution for a more restrictive view. For the alternative would lead to standardization of ideas, either by legislatures, courts, or dominant political or community groups."

Douglas, J., in Terminiello v. Chicago, 337 U. S. 1, at page 4 (1949).

The court finds it hard to believe that it is necessary to resort to witch hunting in our schools to displace misfits. Necessary or not, the Feinberg Law cannot be the solution, because it is an answer which the Legislature, under the Constitution, is powerless to provide.

In view of the decision herein made, various procedural objections made by the parties have become academic, and are not passed upon.

The petitioners are entitled to the relief requested in their petition.

Submit judgment and order accordingly.

The Bronx Slave Market

(Continued from Page 4)

ator, a cabinet, the sink and tub and shelves above the sink. I rubbed all of the furniture in the apartment with furniture oil.

Through it all, my employer sat unperturbed, watching my every move. Once or twice she arose from her chair to flick imaginary dust from an area I had already been over. Then she'd sit down again to watch me.

She was gentle, and persistent, and cruel. She had bought her pound of flesh and she was going

to get every ounce of work out of it.

The pay-off came when she asked me to get down on my hands and knees to scrub all the floors, which were covered with linoleum. I just couldn't do it. I realized with some surprise that the ache in my chest I had been feeling all day was just old-fashioned anger. Suddenly it flared. I stood up and faced her.

"I can't do it!"

"Can't do what, Mary?"

"I can't scrub all of these floors on my hands and knees. This method of scrubbing went out with the Civil War. There are all sorts of modern methods to make floor washing easier. And if they must be scrubbed this way, why don't you provide a knee pad?"

My words tumbled over each other. But she caught their meaning all right.

"All of my girls clean my floors this way, Mary," she said gently. "This is the way I like them done. Well, finish this one and I'll call it a day."

I gathered strength as I scrubbed that floor. I cleaned it with the strength of all slaves everywhere who feel the whip.

I finished my job. After I had changed into my street clothes, this gentle Mrs. Legree counted \$3.40 into my hands—exactly what she owed me (by the hands of the clock, at least) minus my car fare. I was too exhausted to argue about 20 cents.

Tomorrow: What can be done about the Slave Market?