

Executed in 1953

Rosenbergs' son says parents tried unfairly

By ROSEMARY McCracken
The 1953 execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for conspiracy to commit treason, reflects the hysteria of an era in the US permeated by a wave of anti-communist feeling, according to Robert Meeropol.
Meeropol, a son of the Rosenbergs, in a talk Monday at Glendon College, stressed the importance that the spirit of the time played on the jury's decision.
"Nobody expected the verdict to be anything else but 'guilty' in those times when communist purges led by Senator Joseph McCarthy were crippling thousands by incriminating them with 'un-American activities.'
"The case symbolized the utter helplessness of the Left in the U.S.,

said Glendon professor Joseph Starobin, in a background talk of the McCarthy era.
Starobin said the charge of giving plans for construction of an atomic bomb to the Russians illustrated that "it was inconceivable to the Americans that the USSR could develop an atomic bomb on their own, when news was released in 1949 that the Russians had a nuclear weapon."
Meeropol said the events leading to the execution of his parents were triggered by the arrest of Klaus Fuchs, a German physicist, in 1950, after a voluntary confession of giving military secrets to the Russians.
Shortly after, Harry Gold and David Greenglass were arrested as go-betweens in the case. Gold

volunteered the information of his involvement.
Gold and Greenglass revealed that Julius Rosenberg and his wife Ethel were in the same spy ring. Ethel Rosenberg was the elder sister of Greenglass. Meeropol believes Greenglass incriminated the Rosenbergs as the result of a family argument.
According to Meeropol, the evidence at the trial consisted of a sketch of the A-bomb and a lens mold caricatures which would not be much help to the Russians, and a Jello box-top which alleged to be the "password." A series of passport pictures were cited by the prosecution as evidence the Rosenbergs planned to flee the country; these were later found to be family snapshots.

Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were charged with conspiracy to commit treason and were executed on June 19, 1953. All the others incriminated in the case were given sentences under 30 years. Meeropol said the Rosenbergs received the death penalty because they were the only ones who did not confess their guilt.
When questioned, Meeropol said he didn't know exactly what his parents' previous Communist activities were, if any. Rosenberg had been dismissed from the army signal corps for "perjuring himself" by denying he was a Communist. At the trial, a tin can for collecting money for war orphans was produced as evidence of "com-

munism."
Meeropol and his older brother Michael are suing lawyer Louis Nizer for quoting the Rosenbergs' prison letters without permission of the estate.
"Nizer uses 25 letters to justify the psychological motivations of my parents, implying that they were fanatics who neglected their children for politics. He deliberately cut out 18 paragraphs in which they showed interest in their children," said Meeropol.
The Meeropols are now touring Canadian and American universities to speak about their parents' case and raise money for the lawsuit.

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CONSOLE TABLE

The prosecution also gave evidence of a console table it said was a gift from the Russians. This item was later found to have been purchased at Macey's. A hotel registration, confirming the presence of Gold in New Mexico to hand over the plans to Fuchs, was later shown by handwriting specialists to be forged.
Meeropol said that evidence was not brought into the courtroom because the prosecution did not want "any secrets to leak out to the Russians."
At the trial, Rosenberg and his wife denied having anything to do with the conspiracy.
Roy Cohen, the prosecuting attorney, asked Rosenberg if he was a member of the Communist party. Rosenberg replied that he was protected from answering by the fifth amendment (which states that a defendant does not have to give self-incriminating evidence) to the constitution.

Gold told witnesses at the trial that his verbal password as go-between was "I come from Julius." According to Meeropol, a tape exists which records Gold privately telling his lawyer the password was "I come from Bob."
Meeropol said that after Gold's death in 1972, his physician said Gold was a man who had trouble distinguishing fantasy from reality.
FAULTY WITNESS
Fuchs did not readily identify Gold as go-between after the latter confessed his involvement. When pressed as to whether Gold was the man, Fuchs finally threw up his hands and said "if he wants to be the man, OK," said Meeropol.

Moose meat

PRINCE GEORGE (CUP) — A British Columbia man has been fined \$100 after pleading guilty to trafficking in moose meat.
Robert Hauselman, owner of the Lower Post Hotel, was charged after a conservation officer ordered and received a moose meat sandwich in the hotel.

Red Forum today

Should Canadian workers leave the International (AFL-CIO/CLC) unions, in favour of their own Canadian Unions? Is there a difference between American and Canadian union bureaucrats, or is the question much deeper, involving the transforming of the workers' organizations into fighting class instruments independent of any nation state?
These questions will be discussed at a Red Forum being held at York, today Thursday Mar. 28 at 3 p.m. in N 142 Ross.
The topic Canadian Unions: The False Debate, will be presented by Bret Smiley and is sponsored by the Revolutionary Marxist Group. The debate will also be heard downtown at U of T at the International Student Centre 33 St. George St. 8 p.m.

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