

FILE DESCRIPTION

BUREAU FILE

SUBJECT HELEN SOBELL

FILE NO. 100-404849

SECTION NO. ENCLOSURE

SERIALS 70

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### Peace Work

HEADER: Vancouver, B.C.  
I would like to thank the  
Pacific Tribune for the nice  
write-up on Helen Sobell.

The Vancouver Sobell Com-  
mittee has launched a cam-  
paign to secure justice for Mor-  
ton Sobell. The fight for clarity  
and equity has reached new heights  
in the U.S. as Sobell begins  
his tenth year in prison.

The big immediate job the  
local committee is undertaking  
is a Christmas amnesty appeal  
from Canadians to President  
Eisenhower.

Cards are being distributed  
and signatures collected. Later  
the cards will be sent to the  
U.S. president. The cards read:

"It is almost 10 years since  
Morton Sobell entered prison.  
Some may doubt his guilt. But  
very many, among them, feel  
that the time is here when both  
Justice and Mercy call for his  
release. Mr. President, it is  
in your power to grant Morton  
Sobell amnesty. Please act to  
let him rejoin his family in  
freedom by this Christmas  
day."

When Mrs. Sobell was here  
she spoke at various house  
meetings and also addressed  
the United Jewish People's  
Order, Ladies Reading Club, the  
UJPO Dramatic Work Shop  
group, the Stanley Park CCE  
Forum and a meeting at  
Whonnock.

# Appeal

CARDING DATE 24/7

TO THE PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF MORTON SOBELL

President Dwight D. Eisenhower  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Whenever human beings are involved in matters of judgment and justice, there does exist the possibility of human error. Most particularly, when a trial reflects the national tensions of the day, the verdict may suffer from prejudice or unreason, too difficult to dismiss. Every Canadian who thinks about his own freedoms cannot help but concern himself when the question of this kind of an injustice is raised.

It is impressive, therefore, that throughout his imprisonment, Morton Sobell has proclaimed his innocence. Moreover, thirty years is a lifetime sentence that the mother, wife and children of Morton Sobell share with him.

It is the quality of mercy that insists that we, who feel the conscience of Canada as a particular responsibility, address you, Mr. President, to ask that you use your great office to urge a new trial for Morton Sobell, or grant him clemency by commutation of his sentence.

Very Respectfully Yours,

*I wish to add my name*

to the appeal to the President in behalf of Morton Sobell.

Name

Address

City

State

My signature may be made public along with other signers of the Appeal.

I request that my signature not be made public.

THE CLERGYMEN in the United States initiating this appeal include:

- REVEREND GROSS W. ALEXANDER, Lucerne Valley, California
- REVEREND HAROLD J. BASS, Ph. D., Tacoma, Washington
- RABBI BEN ZION BERGMAN, Sherman Oaks, California
- REVEREND DONALD K. BLACKIE, Los Angeles, California
- RABBI MARCUS BREGER, Tucson, Arizona
- REVEREND RICHARD E. BROWN, Fresno, California
- REVEREND JOHN W. CAUGHLAN, Seattle, Washington
- REVEREND MARK A. CHAMBERLIN, Gresham, Oregon
- REVEREND JOHN RUSKIN CLARK, San Diego, California
- REVEREND J. RAYMOND COPE, Berkeley, California
- REVEREND CARL LAWSON CRAIN, Long Beach, California
- REVEREND FRANK CRANE, Los Angeles, California
- REVEREND GEORGE H. DUNNE, S. J., Santa Clara, California
- MR. DOUGLAS FRAZIER, Los Angeles, California
- REVEREND STEPHEN H. FRITCHMAN, Glendale, California
- REVEREND ERWIN A. GAEDE, Los Angeles, California
- REVEREND HARMON M. GEHR, Pasadena, California
- REVEREND RUDOLPH W. GILBERT, Spokane, Washington
- DR. JOHN HERRING, Claremont, California
- REVEREND CLARENCE D. HERRIOTT, Berkeley, California
- REVEREND MARK HOGUE, Los Angeles, California
- REVEREND J. STUART INNERST, Pasadena, California
- RABBI WOLLI KAEHLER, Long Beach, California
- REVEREND KELLEY KEY, Los Angeles, California
- REVEREND DONALD S. LAMKA, Seattle, Washington
- REVEREND T. GORDON LUKE, Berkeley, California
- RABBI HERSCHEL LYMON, Culver City, California
- REVEREND PETER McCORMACK, San Francisco, California
- VERY REVEREND JAMES M. MALLOCH, D. D., Fresno, California
- REVEREND ARCHIE MATSON, Montebello, California
- REVEREND DREYDEN L. PHELPS, Berkeley, California
- REVEREND ERNEST PIPES, JR., Santa Monica, California
- REVEREND RAY C. ROBERTS, Seattle, Washington
- RABBI MICHAEL ROBINSON, Pomona, California
- REVEREND PAUL W. SAWYER, Reseda, California
- DR. D. R. SHARPE, Pasadena, California
- REVEREND ROBERT B. SHAW, Seattle, Washington
- REVEREND HARLAN WAITE, Los Angeles, California
- REVEREND GUY A. WHITE, Oakland, California

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# Intercollegian

THE INTERCOLLEGIAN  
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STUDENT COUNCIL OF THE YMCA & YWCA

the sixth Assembly of  
the Student YMCA-YWCA

second report issue

Issue of the month

## The case of Morton Sobell

At the Assembly, both Dr. Paul Lehmann and Dr. Gardner Murphy called attention to the Morton Sobell trial and sentence. Student Christian Associations should study the record of this case. Wherever a possible serious malfeasance of justice in any society exists, that society cannot go long without examining its behavior and practice. The following statement has been made by a group of distinguished citizens. We commend it to the attention of every Christian Association.

THE UNDERSIGNED are American citizens who believe that the sentence of Morton Sobell should now be commuted. Sobell was convicted of conspiring with others to transmit to the Soviet Union writings and information relating to the national defense of the United States and was sentenced on April 1, 1951 to serve thirty years in Federal Prison.

Morton Sobell was tried with Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were convicted of espionage in connection with the atomic bomb and who were sentenced to death and later executed. Sobell, however, was never implicated in any way with involvement in the atomic espionage for which the Rosenbergs were convicted. This fact was confirmed by the judge who sentenced Sobell.

This statement is not concerned with the Rosenberg conviction. The undersigned are and consistently have been convinced anti-Communists. None are associated with any organization, committee or group of any kind concerned either with the case of the Rosenbergs or that of Sobell, nor are any of the undersigned connected in any way with Morton Sobell or any members of his family. After study of the case, we believe that the following considerations warrant a commutation of the very heavy sentence Sobell is now serving.

1. Sobell was never implicated with atomic espionage for which the Rosenbergs were convicted.

2. The charges against Sobell, supported mainly by the testimony of one man, Max Elitcher, were that he had solicited information and had on one occasion taken something which looked like a can of film to Julius Rosenberg. No specific item of information supposed to have been secured by him or transmitted by him to anyone else is specified in the record. The case against him, therefore, is vague in content and slender in proof. The possibility that a trip to Mexico which he and his family took should be construed as flight cannot be ignored though it is subject to various interpretations.

3. Whether or not the judge and prosecution made sufficient efforts to provide a fair trial, we ought to recognize that the emotions surrounding the trial of the Rosenbergs and the fact that Sobell's case was tried with theirs made it difficult to separate the two cases and to recognize

the very different character of the two charges and evidence introduced to support them respectively.

4. Sobell has already served, with good conduct, nearly eight years in prison, six of them in Alcatraz.

5. As Americans we are fully aware of the threat of communism to our freedom and way of life. Any attack on that freedom from without or within must be resisted. Nevertheless, one of the factors which makes that freedom so precious is its capacity to practice a discipline and humane administration of justice precisely in the cases where emotions are aroused which make it difficult to remain objective about the merits of a specific case. We believe a commutation of the Sobell sentence would demonstrate our national faith in that freedom.

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PAUL RAMSEY

Professor of Religion  
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JEROME NATHANSON

Administrative Leader  
New York Society for  
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(Titles are for identification only.)

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Malcolm T. Sharp's book *Was Justice Done?* (The Modern Review Press, \$3.50) is a very good point of departure. He is a law professor at the University of Chicago. The foreword is by Dr. Harold Urey.

2. A three page statement by Dr. Paul Lehmann is available upon request. This is an enlargement of the remarks he made at the Assembly on the Sobell case.

3. Other sources: Oliver Pilat, *Atomic Spies: John Weir Judgement of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg*; William Reuther, *Atom Spy Hour*. Also refer to *U. of Chicago Law Review*, 1957, Vol. 24, No. 3, p. 588; *Yale Law Journal*, Jan. 1958, 67, No. 3, p. 528; *Wayne Law Review*, Winter 1956, Vol. 1, p. 85.

4. Form a group of faculty and students to talk this thing over, seeking to bring the intelligence, information and conviction of the group to bear on this concrete issue of justice.

reprinted as a public service by

The Committee to Secure Justice for Morton Sobell  
940 Broadway, N. Y. C. AL 4-9983

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