

Edith Segal

AN UNSENT LETTER

To Morton Sobell, No. 31408
Federal Penitentiary
Lewisburg, Pa.

September, 1968

Long ago you too must have gone hiking
up the Palisades to Bear Mountain.
We went back the other day to retrace old trails
and dream young dreams.

At the mountain's peak, in bronze, stands Walt
Whitman
silhouetted against the sky,
his *Song of the Open Road* carved in the rock below.
He seemed to be singing to you:

*"Camerado, I give you my hand!
I give you my love more precious than money.
I give you myself before preaching or law."*

Walt would have loved you, Mort.
He would have understood your longing
when you wrote from Alcatraz years ago:

*"If I could listen to a symphony once again
I would be willing to spend a week
in solitary confinement."*

We've never met, Mort. "Soon, soon" ... all of us
to whom "*love is more precious than money, than law,*"
will join hands across the continent
and march towards the Hudson
and on towards that mountain.
As we hike along the river we'll come within sight
of the Death House at Sing Sing on the other side.

Written across the sky will be:

ETHEL AND JULIUS ROSENBERG JUNE 19, 1953

We'll chant Ethel's words written in that Death
House
January 24th, 1953:

IF WE DIE

*You shall know, my sons, shall know
why we leave the song unsung,
the book unread, the work undone
to rest beneath the sod.*

*Mourn no more, my sons, no more-
why the lies and smears were framed,
the tears we shed, the hurt we bore
to all shall be proclaimed.*

*Earth shall smile, my sons, shall smile
and green above our resting place
the killing end, the world rejoice
in brotherhood and peace.*

*Work and build, my sons, and build
a monument to love and joy,
to human worth, to faith we kept
for you, my sons, for you.*

In silence we'll proceed. Walt Whitman will speak
for us:

*"You road I enter upon and look around,
I believe you are not all that is here.
I believe that much unseen is also here."*

Time to close, Mort, time to work
to open your road to that mountain
remembering with humility and with wonder
the words you wrote on your *Season's Greeting Card*
which you sent from Lewisburg dated December 1967,
words written in the eighteenth year
of your cruel and unjust imprisonment:

*"Dear Edith, dear friends,
Hold on...soon, soon!"*

So long, Mort.
Yes, we'll hold on!