



Gil Green rejoins his family briefly in Foley Square before his imprisonment. Left to right: Josie, Danny, Lil, Gil, Ralphie..

Gil Reaches Fifty

The Gil Green Family Marks a 50th Birthday

By CARL HIRSCH

CHICAGO

Gil Green must be home before we can say that the cold war has been really extinguished and the McCarthyite wave has been stemmed.

That is the reminder tied on the finger of democratic America, a reminder made urgent as the Illinois Communist leader spends his 50th birthday on Sept. 24 in the Leavenworth penitentiary.

In the Green family home, on Chicago's Northwest Side, the remoteness of the miles and the years can hardly separate Gil from his loved ones. For Mrs. Lil Green, the coming birthday is an occasion for drawing the family circle even more closely around "the favorite man" of this household.

The birthday is meaningful for the towering 19-year-old Danny Green, who has been the man of the house over these years. The beautiful and blossoming young lady, 15-year-old Josie, pauses from the teen-age social whirl to talk about the birthday of her dad.

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AND then there is 11-year-old Ralphie, plodding through a grammar lesson with the patient help of his mother. Even from this young fellow, you get the sense of burning pride and rich affection which this family feels for Gil.

"This birthday is of course a special date for us," says Lil Green, "but we share it gladly with the thousands of Gil's friends and co-workers."

September 24 is actually a sig-

nificant date for many other Americans to whom Gil's imprisonment symbolizes the unfinished business of American democracy.

"In the name of humanity and simple justice, what has our country come to if political opinions are still used to keep a man like Gil Green locked in Leavenworth penitentiary for the best years of his life?" That was the way Mrs. Green posed the question in a letter which she sent out recently with copies of Gil Green's powerful book, "The Enemy Forgotten."

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MANY of Gil's friends will want to send him a birthday greeting, addressed PMB 73335 at Leavenworth, Kansas.

But an even more meaningful observance of this birthday is for friends to pass on to others one or more copies of the book which is Gil Green's great contribution to an understanding of our times. In "The Enemy Forgotten," Gil Green discloses the true foe of America's democratic majority. And the book does something more. It tears the shroud of fog from a question which has been troubling many Americans—Is there really some conspiracy, some fifth-column threat to American security from the Communists?

The book also reveals the Communist, the flesh-and-blood Communist whom Gil Green has symbolized from his groping years in Chicago's schools, through his brilliant career as a youth leader and finally as a mature and capable party leader.

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THE GIL GREEN FAMILY MAKES A 50th BIRTHDAY

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IF THE BOOK tells that personal story, it is told once again in the sheaf of treasured letters which his family now keeps so carefully, letters that mark off the days of a cruel eight-year prison sentence like calendar leaves.

They are letters alive with Gil's rich vitality, his humor, his probing intelligence, his tender humanism. There are the warm-hearted birthday letters as each member of the family reaches another milestone.

The letters picture Gil pondering America's problems as he carries out his dull routine of dispensing prison garb, studying Spanish, learning and then setting aside chess-playing because even in prison "there is not enough time" for him to spend it on the royal game.

PERIODICALLY, when there is money enough, the family makes the long trip to visit with their beloved Gil. But even those moments, so brief, are priceless for Lil Green and for the children.

Ralphie was a first-grader when his father was compelled to become a political refugee from the McCarthy terror. And unless the McCarthyite vengeance against Gil Green can be ended, Ralphie may be a high school graduate before his father is home.

All across America, a renewed cry must be raised now for the freeing of the Smith Act victims. And the plea for amnesty becomes a thousand times more compelling a political task when you see its meaning in the home of the Green family.

"They are such wonderful children," says the courageous Lil Green, "and they need their father."