

Maryland, My Maryland Is 'Communist' In Tokyo, Amazed Traveler Learns

American Salesman's Experience In Japan Adds
New Chapter To Long Story Of Song's Origin.
It's Also Credited To Old Hymn

By Lee McCardell

James Ryder Randall's ghost has a headache. That Communist song, "Maryland, My Maryland," seems to have been banned in Japan.

The word comes through Willard Price, writing in the *Cornhill Magazine*, a London publication. Price describes a journey by airplane from Tokyo to Mukden with an American automobile salesman, a Japanese major, an ex-bandit and a geisha girl as fellow-passengers.

Salesman Bursts Into Song

The geisha, becoming bored during the flight, began to sing. And, as Price tells the story:

Then the salesman, on his own hook, burst forth with "Maryland, My Maryland." The geisha frowned. The major turned and glowered. The bandit stared. It was enough to embarrass even a salesman. He stopped.

"What's the matter?" he wanted to know.

"This song," said the major. "You know what it is?"

"Of course. An American song. Maryland, My Maryland."

It was the major's turn to look astonished. "Sa! So desu ka? I did not know it was an American song."

"What did you think it was?"

"The same tune is used by the Communists in Japan—for their song of revolution. Very dangerous to be heard singing it. The police would not know it had ever been a foreign song. They would not believe you. You would go to jail."

The salesman experimented with no more songs. . . .

Old Hymn Also Cited

All of which is the continuation of an old, old story centering around the tune of "Maryland, My Maryland." The tune is said to have originated as a Roman Catholic hymn which was discarded during the Reformation. But the music survived in Germany, where it was used for the words of

"O Tannenbaum," a Westphalian folk song.

Another old song, "Lauriger Horatius," was sung to practically the same tune. And it was to the tune of "Lauriger Horatius" that "Maryland, My Maryland" was first sung. But when "Maryland, My Maryland" was first published, it was set to an adaptation of "Tannenbaum."

Gives Historical Background

The authority for this is Dr. Matthew Page Andrews, historian, and literary executor of James Ryder Randall, who wrote the words of "Maryland, My Maryland."

Dr. Andrews recalled today that the original printed arrangement for the song was the work of one Charles Wolfgang Amadeus Ellerbrock, a young German music teacher employed by the Baltimore publishing house of Miller & Beacham.

A comparison of Ellerbrock's original arrangement with "Tannenbaum" reveals only a slight variation in melody and rhythm. Ellerbrock's score also differs slightly from the musical arrangement commonly used today for "Maryland, My Maryland."

The Tokyo Version

About fifteen years ago it was reported from Tokyo that Japanese workers marching in a Labor Day parade there had sung a labor hymn to the tune of "Maryland, My Maryland." The parade was part of a demonstration which resulted in the arrest of about twenty-five Radical leaders.

In more recent years a controversy arose in England over the tune of "The Red Flag," a song variously described as "the battle song of the Communists" and "the anthem of the Third Internationale." The tune was that of "Maryland, My Maryland."

Started As German Song

"The Red Flag," seldom heard in Baltimore, but frequently sung at

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MARYLAND'S SONG COMMUNIST--TOKYO

Salesman's Experience Adds New Chapter To Long Story Of Tune's Origin

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Communist rallies in New York, appears to have begun as a German song. It was translated by Jim Connell into this English:

*The workers' flag is deepest red;
It shrouded oft our martyred dead;
And ere their limbs grew stiff and
cold
Their life blood dyed its every fold.*

*Then raise the scarlet banner high;
Beneath its folds we'll live and die;
Though comrades flinch and traitors
sneer,
We'll keep the Red flag flying there.*

Connell claimed that these words had been written for the music of "The White Cockade," originally a battle song of the Jacobins and later an air that was popular in Ireland. No score of "The White Cockade" could be found here today, but if, as seems probable, its air is the same as that of "The Blue Cockade," sometimes called "The Green Cockade," another well-known folk song, it has nothing in common with "Maryland, My Maryland."

Like "Ma Normandie"

"Some years ago," Dr. Andrews said, "I heard Dr. William Chase Green, of the Johns Hopkins University, play 'Lauriger Horatius,' 'Tannenbaum,' 'Maryland, My Maryland' and another popular melody of the Civil War period called 'Ma Normandie.' The variations were so slight that only a musician could tell the difference. All the tunes sounded alike to me. I have never heard 'The White Cockade.'"

It appears evident that the Communist song forbidden in Japan is a Japanese version of the German "Red Flag"—sung to an arrangement of the German "Tannenbaum." But if you're planning a trip to Japan in the near future it might be a good idea to leave "Maryland, My Maryland" home.
