

Today's Guest Column

THE whole power of the labor-progressive movement must be thrown quickly into the struggle to save the Fair Employment Practices Committee—and the most urgent task is to keep the present FEPC by getting Congress to vote an appropriation for the next fiscal year.

The war agencies budget submitted by President Roosevelt calls for a \$599,000 appropriation for FEPC. Unless this appropriation is authorized, the FEPC ceases to exist on June 30, and the struggle for a permanent FEPC and all other anti-Discrimination legislation becomes tremendously more difficult.

The FEPC appropriation is now being considered by a sub-committee of the House Appropriations Committee, headed by Representative Clarence Cannon. It faces many hurdles which only the mass pressure of an aroused people can enable it to clear.

First, the FEPC appropriation must be kept as a part of the over-all war agencies appropriation bill, and not made a separate item which could be more easily knifed.

Second, the appropriation must be approved by the sub-committee and the House Approp-



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riations Committee as a whole.

Third, a "rule" for the bill must be obtained from the notoriously reactionary House Rules Committee. And it is important that chairman Cannon be urged to demand a rule which waives all points of order, thus blocking efforts to kill the appropriation on a technicality.

Fourth, the bill must be passed over determined opposition in both the House and the Senate.

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THIS fight for the FEPC appropriation is now the main struggle on the fair employment practice front. It is highly important, however, at the same time to intensify the campaign for signatures on House Discharge Petition No. 7 to take the permanent FEPC bill away from the Rules Committee and bring it before the House for a vote. More than 100 signatures are still needed on this petition. If they are obtained quickly, this demonstration of strength for FEPC will greatly help passage of the FEPC appropriation.

The supreme importance of real mass organization support for the FEPC—quickly—cannot be overestimated. This struggle is a testing ground on which all the wartime gains of Negroes and other minority peoples are

Danger Threatens Funds for FEPC

fundamentally at stake. The triumph of FEPC in each of its successive crises during the past four years has symbolized the whole forward movement of American democracy. The triumph of FEPC in the serious crisis it faces now will convincingly establish the ability of the progressive forces of our country to consolidate and extend these wartime democratic gains in the period ahead.

It follows, of course, that a defeat for FEPC now would be a terrible blow to the whole democratic perspective for which the progressive forces of America are struggling.

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THERE has been very broad formal endorsement of FEPC, but the vigorous mass activity necessary to win the fight simply has not been forthcoming. The struggle must be stepped up tremendously—and we have very little time in which to do it.

The House may vote on the FEPC appropriation this week, and the Senate soon afterward. Let our representatives receive thousands of telegrams and letters and scores of delegations demanding approval of the appropriation and of the permanent FEPC bill. Let this be done NOW—DURING THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS.

We can win our fight for FEPC, but we'll have to fight a lot harder to do it. And we'll have to do the job fast.