

Quick Action Urgent as Gov't Rushes DuBois Trial

(This is the first of two articles on the indictment of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois and his associates in the former Peace Information Center. The next article will analyze the legal and political issues involved in the case).

By Doxey A. Wilkerson

QUICK ACTION is needed by many thousands of democratic Americans to quash the phony "foreign agent" indictment against Dr. W. E. B. DuBois and his associates in the former Peace Information Center—Mrs. Elizabeth Moos, Miss Sylvia Soloff, Kyrle Elkin and Abbot Simon.

These fighters for peace are being hurried to trial on May 14 in one of the most indecent acts in the long, shameful series of Truman Administration aggressions against the liberties of the people. This is fundamentally a political indictment, despite Government claims to the contrary; and it can be set aside only through organized mass political pressure on the President and Attorney General.

The alleged "crime" of Dr. DuBois and his associates was failure to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act. The act of so registering would have led them to brand as "un-American" their activities in the Peace Information Center—including circulation of the International Red Cross Statement and the World Peace (Stockholm) Appeal against the use of atomic warfare. Thus, they are being prosecuted for refusal to tell the lie that their struggles for peace, as American citizens and in the interest of their own country, were really undertaken as "agents of a foreign principal."

Let us not underestimate the fundamental importance of this case for all Americans who cherish democracy and peace. Here is a calculated attempt by the imperialist Government of the United States to smash the organized peace movement in our country and to curb the mounting struggles of the Negro liberation movement—both of which are symbolized in the person and leadership of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois.

THE NEGRO PEOPLE were quick to sense the importance of this new attack against Dr. DuBois; their reaction was prompt and sharp. Negro college presidents and teachers, fraternal leaders, editors and columnists, the national board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, leaders of women's organizations, students on southern college campuses, and hundreds of individuals writing "letters-to-the-editor"—all denounced the indictment as shockingly unjust. All declared their confidence in and support

for the distinguished scholar and freedom fighter who has never betrayed his people in more than half a century of public life.

It is clear that the Government's attack upon Dr. DuBois has no base among the Negro people. Even the most confirmed redbaiting reformists and Social Democrats among them have not dared to come out in support of this indictment. The masses of Negroes on all class levels are angry at this persecution of the eminent leader who has come to symbolize their highest aspirations. They are speaking up; and we may be sure they will be heard from in ever increasing volume in the fight to keep Dr. DuBois and his associates out of jail.

UNFORTUNATELY, the trade union movement and progressive organizations generally have been much slower in grasping the basic significance of the DuBois-Peace Information Center indictments. With two or three notable exceptions, even the progressive unions, peace groups, fraternal, cultural, youth, women and other organizations still remain silent—while the Truman Administration hastens to clamp Dr. DuBois and his associates in prison.

Here is a situation which recurs far too often in the continuing struggle against imperialist reaction: while the militant Negro masses move far out in front, their working class and other allies lag distressingly behind.

Leaders of working class and peace organizations would do well to understand that it is impossible to defeat the U. S. imperialist drive toward war and fascism without consolidating a firm alliance with the Negro people.

And it should be clear that the powerful and necessary support which the Negro liberation movement can bring to the working class movement in general and the peace movement in particular cannot be taken for granted; it must be won—through mass struggles by white Americans on concrete issues of

special concern to the Negro people.

It is urgently necessary for leaders of progressive organizations to fight on every front to break through the white chauvinism, redbaiting, ignorance, intimidation or whatever else now immobilizes the masses of the working class and its allies. Many, many thousands of white Americans need to be moved quickly in defense of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois—which means in defense of their own liberties and of peace.

This is the only way to keep Dr. DuBois and his associates out of jail. It is also the only way to strengthen the decisive alliance of the working class and the Negro people.

THE ISSUES and personalities involved in the DuBois-P. I. C. case have very special interest to many groups of Americans, on the basis of which they can be moved in struggle to quash this dangerous and immoral indictment.

The basic issue is the right of American citizens to speak out for peace. This is a matter of direct concern to some 2,000,000 U. S. signers of the Stockholm Appeal, and to millions of other citizens who are now challenging the war policy of Acheson and Truman.

Dr. DuBois is an eminent man of letters—poet, playwright, and master of English prose with few peers in our country. He is admired and honored by cultural workers throughout the world.

Dr. DuBois and Mrs. Moos are distinguished educators, and have won the respect and confidence of many thousands in that profession.

Miss Soloff was stenographer in the former Peace Information Center. Her indictment, along with the officials she served, carries implications which many office workers will be quick to grasp.

Mr. Elkin is a small businessman and active leader in the Progressive Party.

Mr. Simon, for years a national leader of the progressive youth movement, has served

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during recent years as the spark-plug of many vigorous peace activities throughout the country.

Thus, the campaign to defend Dr. DuBois and his P. I. C. associates offers very substantial possibilities for uniting broad sections of the working class, the Negro people, artists, scientists, educators and other professionals, small businessmen, women, youth—especially the many and varied local and national peace groups now pringing up everywhere—in a mighty coalition to beat back this most

serious aggression of the war-makers against the peace and democratic rights of the American people.

The recently formed National Committee to Defend Dr. W. E. B. DuBois and Associates in the Peace Information Center, headed by Paul Robeson and Elmer Benson, has issued a call for action by people's organizations throughout the country to quash the indictments against these very-much-American fighters for peace. They urge:

- Thousands of resolutions and tens of thousands of individual letters and telegrams voicing this demand to President Truman and Attorney General McGrath. (Copies should be sent to the Committee at 16-18 West 29th Street, Room 311, New York City); and

- Thousands of dollars for legal defense to "Shirley Graham, Treasurer," at the above address.

This call should bring an immediate response — during the next few days—from people's organizations everywhere.

We are here called upon to fight one of the most dangerous and far-reaching civil liberty cases now before the courts. We have but very little time in which to prevent a horrible injustice and a telling blow to the people's struggle for peace and freedom.

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