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# You May Be INTERESTED IN By G. W. JACKSON



## The Case Of DuBois

Last week this column reminisced about Dr. DuBois who was the able teacher of the writer of these lines at old Wilberforce University. In February of this year William Edward Burghardt DuBois was indicted by a federal grand jury along with four other officials of the Peace Information Center, with headquarters in New York City, on a charge of failing to register as foreign agents. The conclusion of this column will tell what the government does to the defendant in a case of this kind if it decides that he is guilty.

This is how it all came about. In the middle of March, 1950, Communists from many countries convened at Stockholm, Sweden, in an assembly known as the Permanent Committee of the World Peace Congress. This assembly issued a document called the World Peace Appeal, or the Stockholm Peace Petition. The Petition said: "We demand the unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon of intimidation and mass extermination of human beings. We demand the institution of strict international control to enforce this. We shall consider as a war criminal that government which first employs the atomic weapon against any country. We call upon all people of good will throughout the world to sign this appeal."

This then was the Stockholm Peace Appeal. Forthwith committees were set up in various countries to circulate this petition and secure signers. Special effort was made to interest laboring, youth, women, cultural, sports, scientific and religious groups. Millions of signatures were obtained in this way. The Peace Information Center was established in New York City to publicize the petition and secure active crusaders for peace. Albert Simon was the director, Dr. DuBois the chairman of the sponsoring committee, and other able and liberal New Yorkers were officials and members.

Hardly had the Stockholm convention released its Petition before Secretary of State Acheson branded it as "a propaganda trick in the spurious peace offensive of the Soviet Union, designed to weaken the military security of all the democratic nations of the West and at the same time strengthen the military preparation of the Russian-dominated countries of Eastern Europe, China, and Korea in their total struggle against the United States and Great Britain especially." He also charged that the Petition was backed up by Russia and was meant to spread confusion among the peoples of the free nations and to betray them into inaction that would condition them for defeat.


Meanwhile Mr. Acheson directed the Peace Information Center officials to file under the Foreign Registry Act. But the officials insisted at the time that the agency was exempted under the law. Peace Information Center officials then sought to arrange a conference between Dr. DuBois and the Department of Justice, but the Department would not agree and the request for the conference was refused. Later Dr. DuBois wrote to Attorney General McGrath to seek his aid in setting up such a conference, but Mr. McGrath did not answer the DuBois letter.

Secretary Acheson stated the position of the government on the Stockholm Petition. How does Dr. DuBois feel? In a statement prepared shortly after the indictment Dr. DuBois said, "My colleagues and I feel there is no basis in fact or fancy for the charge that the Peace Information Center is representative of a foreign principal. As chairman of the Center during its existence, I can categorically say that we were an entirely American organization whose sole objective was to secure peace and prevent a third war." Later he gave to the press a statement in which he declared that he thought it a "curious thing" that he should be called upon to defend himself against criminal charges for openly advocating the one thing all people want—Peace. "All my life I have studied and worked hoping that in some way I might help my fellowmen to a better way of life, free of poverty and injustice. Can it be criminal to hope and work for peace when the world has barely emerged from the horrors of the second world war and is now trembling on the brink of an atomic catastrophe?"

Here now is an overview of the case of Dr. William E. B. DuBois, scholar, author, teacher, co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, brilliant editor of the Crisis, founder of the Pan-African Congress whose goal was the uplift of black folks everywhere, uncompromising leader fighting to give his people their rightful place both in American history and American life. These facts are needed by those who would understand the case against the 83-year-old scholar and leader.

If the court finds that the failure to comply with the Registry Act was unlawful and wilful, the maximum penalty will be five years imprisonment and a \$10,000 fine. May the verdict show that Dr. DuBois has never failed to be a friend to true democracy.

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