

Robeson, DuBois, Dunjee, Mrs. Bass ^{v68 #1} Assail Move to Outlaw Communist Party

The following petition, signed by Paul Robeson, internationally famed singer and actor; W. E. B. DuBois, scholar; Roscoe Dunjee, editor of the *Black Dispatch*, Oklahoma City, Okla., and Mrs. Charlotta A. Bass, editor-publisher of the *California EAGLE*, was sent this week to President Truman and the 80th congress:

A PETITION

TO THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

We, the undersigned Negro Americans, respectfully urge you to repudiate decisively the fascist-like proposal of Labor Secretary Lewis B. Schwellenbach to legalize the Communist party.

We submit this petition in the interest of the democratic rights of the Negro people and of all other Americans, not as an endorsement of the philosophy and program of the Communist party.

It is clear that the Negro's historic goal of freedom from racial discrimination and oppression can be attained only in a society where the civil and political liberties of minorities are fully protected by government. We view with utmost concern, therefore, the proposal of a member of the President's Cabinet to negate the fundamental democratic premises of our nation by suppressing a minority political party with whose program the government in power is at odds.

The rise of fascism in Germany teaches us all too well the fearful ends to which Secretary Schwellenbach's proposal would lead. Hitler first outlawed the Communist party. Then, under the false guise of "fighting communism," he destroyed the trade union movement and all other democratic associations of the German people. There followed the brutal and systematic persecution and annihilation of the whole Jewish people, and then a terrible war to secure Nazi imperialist interests at the expense of other nations.

Our government must not play into the hands of those fascist-imperialist forces within our borders who would cherish a similar program for America!

We know full well that a triumphant fascism in America would doom the already oppressed Negro people to the horrible fate of the Jewish minority in Nazi Germany. We will resist with all our power every step taken in that direction!

As Negro Americans, we cannot be unmindful that this proposal to outlaw the Communist Party comes precisely when our federal government professes grave concern over the democratic rights of peoples in far-distant parts of the world, but is strangely apathetic about the mounting attacks upon the economic and political rights—indeed, the very lives—of the Negro people of the United States. This fact aggravates our concern.

We call upon the President and Congress promptly to enact legislation to guarantee fair employment practices, to abolish poll tax and other barriers to free elections, to outlaw lynching, and to establish a national code of civil rights. This program, we submit, is far more consistent with the democratic ideals and aspirations of the American people than the fascist-like proposal to legalize the Communist Party.

(Signed) PAUL ROBESON,
W. E. B. DUBOIS,
ROSCOE DUNJEE,
CHARLOTTA A. BASS.