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W.E.B. DU BOIS AND THE STRUGGLE
AGAINST RACISM IN THE WORLD

by
Herbert Aptheker

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/Note: Dr. Herbert Aptheker, National Director of the American Institute for Marxist Studies in San Jose, California, is a well-known authority on the writings and work of Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois. He is the editor of The Published Writings of W.E.B. Du Bois, a 40-volume series of which 23 have so far been published by the Kraus-Thomson Organization. He also edited the 3-volume study, The Correspondence of Du Bois, published by the University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst. The author of 30 volumes on social sciences, he continues to teach law at the University of California, Berkeley.

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W.E.B. Du Bois and the Struggle Against Racism in the World
by Herbert Aptheker

The life of William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963) was devoted fundamentally to eliminating racism in the world. Bearing in mind how widespread that poison was during his lifetime, how deeply imbedded it was in the nature of dominant social systems and how great consequence it had to the wealth and power of exploitative ruling classes, it is clear that Du Bois had selected a powerful adversary.

Du Bois, as an Afro-American growing up in late nineteenth century United States and living both in the North and in the South, felt daily upon his own flesh and soul--and that of his family and friends--the impact of this poison. He began his crusade with his own people and his own country; he soon realized, however, that the ideology and practice of racism was worldwide. The realization came with a comprehension of its strength in Latin America, in Africa and in Asia. He saw that the effort at the liberation of blacks in the United States was part of a global effort to eliminate the special oppression and exploitation of coloured peoples. By the first decade of the twentieth century he realized, as he stated in 1907, that the liberation of the coloured peoples of the world was part of the vast movement for the emancipation of the working classes of the world.

Du Bois concentrated upon the condition of his own people in the first place. The concern for coloured people everywhere was a logical consequence thereof. It has to be emphasized, however, that he never thought of this issue in any exclusionary sense or with any invidious content. Du Bois had enormous pride in his own people but that pride was part of his wonder at the magnificence of human beings in general and of his confidence in the splendid life they could create when freed of exploitative social systems that breed, need and sustain divisive concepts, laws and practices. To eliminate the specially onerous oppression and exploitation of coloured men and women (and Du Bois early called attention to the frightful suppression of women, in particular) was part of the necessary effort to eliminate inequality and injustice confronting all who--bereft of the means of production--worked for those holding in their private possession the wealth and producing capacity of the world.

* * *

Africa is a refrain in Du Bois' life from its earliest moments until its end, after ninety-five stirring and fruitful years. He remembered to the end of his days the melody and sounds of an African lullaby his grandmother sang to him in his infancy. He lies buried in Ghana, in the soil of that West Africa from which certain of his ancestors had been torn by slave traders centuries ago.

As a young man in his twenties, he devoted the ten minutes allotted to him at the 1980 commencement ceremonies at Harvard to explaining to the distinguished white audience what made "Jefferson Davis a Representative American"--namely his energy, drive, lack of compassion and brutal vigor for self-advancement-- and suggesting what the African component in America could offer: unselfishness, warmth, composure, neighborliness and above all the value and dignity of service to others.

His doctoral dissertation, accepted at Harvard in 1895 and published as Harvard Historical Studies No.1 the next year, examined The Suppression of the African Slave Trade to the United States of America, 1638-1870. It was the first scientific work in Afro-American history and it remains the classic exposition of this subject. Basically a scrupulously documented collection of data, it is not devoid of value judgement, which, Du Bois always insisted, could not be omitted from true scientific endeavour. Its final chapter condemns the "cupidity and carelessness" of those in power in the United States; its closing words are: "...we may conclude that it behooves nations as well as men to do things at the very moment when they ought to be done."

In his address before the American Negro Academy in 1897, entitled "The Conservation of Races", Du Bois pointed to the emergence of unifying movements among various peoples of the earth--he named the Japanese and the Slavic peoples--and urged that the same effort at unity was required of the Afro-Americans. In this instance, Du Bois projected for the first time his famous concept of the "twoness" of the Afro-American: "Am I an American or am I a Negro?" His reply was that the Afro-American is sui generis and is one of the great peoples of the earth which, through unity and collective consideration, must lead in working out its own destiny. Here, too, he projected the concept of Pan-Negroism as he called it then, and urged that the millions of Afro-Americans see themselves as part of a coming unity of African peoples in the world.

It was in the very year of the delivery of that address that Henry Sylvester-Williams, born in Trinidad the same year as Du Bois, founded an African Association in London where he practiced law. This Association projected the idea of holding what it termed a "Pan-African Conference" which was finally convened in London, at

the Westminster Town Hall, from 23 to 25 July 1900. Some thirty black men and women from the United States, Haiti, Abyssinia, Liberia, the British West Indies and West Africa attended.

The Lord Bishop of London welcomed the delegates at the opening ceremonies and, according to Du Bois, "a promise was obtained from Queen Victoria, through Joseph Chamberlain", then Colonial Secretary, not to "overlook the interest and welfare of the native races".

Sylvester-Williams served as General Secretary of this Conference; its President was Alexander Walters, Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church. Du Bois, who had been in Paris in charge of the "Negro Section" of the United States exhibit at the World's Fair held earlier that year in Paris, was Chairman of the Committee on Address. His words were issued in the name of the Conference under the title "To the Nations of the World". In this appears for the first time Du Bois' famous statement that the colour line is the problem of the twentieth century--then just dawning. It appears in this context:

The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the colour-line, the question as to how far differences of race--which show themselves chiefly in the colour of the skin and the texture of the hair--will hereafter be made the basis of denying to over half the world the right of sharing to their utmost ability the opportunities and privileges of modern civilization.

A paragraph of this appeal elaborates the matter which would be central to Du Bois' thinking for the next six decades:

The modern world must remember that in this age, when the ends of the world are being brought so near together, the millions of black men in Africa, America and the Islands of the Sea, not to speak of the brown and yellow myriads elsewhere, are bound to have a great influence upon the world in the future, by reason of sheer numbers and physical contact. If now the world of culture bends itself toward giving Negroes and other dark men the largest and broadest opportunity for education and self-development, then this contact and influence is bound to have a beneficial effect upon the world and hasten progress. But if, by reason of carelessness, prejudice, greed and injustice, the black world is to be exploited and ravished and degraded, the results must be deplorable, if not fatal--not simply to them, but to the high ideals of justice, freedom and culture which a thousand years of Christian civilization have held before Europe.

The address also contained specific proposals for various areas of the world: for the United States there is this paragraph:

Let not the spirit of Garrison, Phillips and Douglass wholly die out in America; may the conscience of a great

nation rise and rebuke all dishonesty and unrighteous oppression toward the American Negro, and grant to him the right of franchise, security of person and property, and generous recognition of the great work he has accomplished in a generation toward raising nine millions of human beings from slavery to manhood.

Bishop Walters delivered a paper devoted to the 1900 London meeting to the 1901 gathering of the American Negro Academy. Du Bois was President of the Academy. One year later, in March 1902, a printed prospectus for the African Development Company was issued from a Philadelphia office and signed by T.J. Minton, Chairman, Du Bois, Secretary, and H.T. Kealing, Treasurer. The objective of this enterprise was to raise a capital stock of \$50,000 "to acquire land in East Central Africa to be used for the cultivation of coffee and other products; to establish and maintain the means for transport by land, river, lakes and ocean; to establish and maintain trading stations, and to develop the natural resources of the lands acquired". The prospectus stated that "the promoters" possessed "contracts with certain native chiefs for valuable concessions of land". Du Bois' papers show a continuing interest in African affairs thereafter, but the African Development Company seems never to have reached the stage of incorporation, let alone actual operation. It remains rather mysterious, but it certainly shows great interest in Africa and its development. In some respects, it reminds of one of the early plans of Marcus Garvey to be announced in a later generation.

In November 1904, in Liverpool, England, the Ethiopian Progressive Association was founded. In March 1905 a revised version of its constitution and by-laws was published. In that form, a copy went to Du Bois from the Secretary of the Association, Kwesi Ewusi, of the Gold Coast colony. The Association had twenty founding members. They were from England, Sierra Leone, Lagos, Fernando Po, Barbados, Jamaica, Cuba, the Gold Coast, and South Africa.

The objectives of the Association were reminiscent of Du Bois' 1900 call "To the Nations of the World": to develop friendship among Africans in England; to "create a bond of union" among all African peoples; to "raise the social status" of all Africans; to "strengthen the friendly relations" among them and all other peoples; and "to discuss...matters of vital importance concerning Africa in particular, and the Negro race in general".

In 1905, under the leadership of Du Bois and the very militant William Monroe Trotter, was founded the Niagara Movement uniting a broad spectrum of black professionals and intellectuals who demanded full equality for black people, in contradistinction to the programme of acquiescence in second-class citizenship which was being promoted by Booker T. Washington. The concept of Pan-Africanism was present in the early texts written by Du Bois, and at the 1906 Annual meeting of the Niagara Movement the constitution was amended to add among its fourteen standing committees one called "The Pan-African Department".

To further the purposes of the Niagara Movement, Du Bois founded a monthly magazine, The Moon, printed in Memphis, Tennessee. It was published between December 1905 and July 1906. Very few copies survive. One of them, dated 2 March 1906, contains a regular column conducted by Du Bois and entitled: "Tidings of the Darker Millions". It was devoted to news of African and African-derived peoples around the world. This particular account emphasized reports of uprisings in South Africa against colonial rule. It reflects Du Bois' constant concern to bring news of the actual activities and desires of African people to the attention of an audience in the United States.

From 1898 to 1913, Du Bois organized the Atlanta University Conferences devoted to questions confronting black people especially in the United States. Characteristically, however, discussion of areas beyond the United States was encouraged by Du Bois. In this connexion, a seminal event occurred at the 1906 Conference wherein, at Du Bois' invitation, the great anthropologist, Franz Boas, delivered a paper forthrightly attacking ideas of racism and bringing forward significant data on the influence of African civilizations and their pioneering contributions to the well-being of all humanity. This paper and similar work by the pioneer black historian Leo Hansberry, were very influential in Du Bois' thinking and he repeatedly paid tribute to their impact upon his own development.

From January 1907 through February 1910, Du Bois edited, along with L.M. Hershaw and F.H. Murray, a monthly magazine, The Horizon, which served as the organ of the Niagara Movement. In addition to contributing poetry and short stories to this magazine, Du Bois was in charge of a column called "The Overlook", which devoted itself to reporting major developments throughout the world impinging upon African and African-derived peoples. In the first number of The Horizon, Du Bois called attention to the "shameful" exploitation of African peoples by Western capital, including the capital from the United States, especially Rockefeller, and warned: "The day of reckoning is coming". Thereafter, no issue of Horizon failed to observe African developments. The issue of February 1907 reported on the "exploitation of the native West Africans" by "organized, ruthless and ruling capital backed by greed". Issues called attention to the work of such African leaders as Casely Hayford and Edward Blyden. In the issue dated November-December 1908, Du Bois wrote of the desirability of the development of a vast Pan-African movement because "the need of Liberia, the cause of Haiti, the cause of South Africa is our cause, and the sooner we realize this the better."

Not only did The Horizon, as the organ of the Niagara Movement, pay great attention to African developments; it is a fact that the Movement had a Pan-African department reflecting Du Bois' early and basic commitment to this effort.

Related is the fact that at least as early as 1909, Du Bois had conceived the publication of what he then called an Encyclopaedia Africana. Stationery with this heading was printed, and he actively sought scholarly participation throughout the world. His effort was quite successful, but neither at that time nor later was he able to find the funds to bring the great idea into existence. He was to return to this effort in the 1930s, with some encouragement from the Phelps-Stokes Fund, but other than the publication of two editions in the 1940s, containing an annotated index and selected bibliographical guide, that project under the auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund also failed to materialize. It was only with the coming into being of an independent Ghana, headed by Du Bois' disciple, Kwame Nkrumah, that the Encyclopaedia project could again be taken up seriously. Du Bois went to Ghana in 1961 despite the hostility of the United States State Department to direct this project and to bring into being the vision of his young manhood. With the able assistance of the very conscientious Dr. Alphaeus Hunton, this project was considerably advanced by the time Du Bois died, in his 95th year in August 1963. There is indication despite a most unfortunate hiatus of more than a decade, that something approaching the vision of Du Bois would yet materialize.

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The single most sustained, and in many ways most significant of the manifold activities of Du Bois, was his leadership in the founding, in 1910, of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), and his editorship of its monthly magazine, The Crisis, from its first number issued in November 1910, until his resignation from the NAACP in the summer of 1934.

The Crisis, as Du Bois' Moon and Horizon, paid careful attention to the history, culture and art of Africa during the period of Du Bois' editorship. In the first number of Crisis, in his column, "What to Read", he called attention to eleven articles dealing with Africa in various magazines. Out of a total of twenty books which Du Bois felt his readers should know about, nine had as their subject some aspect of the life and history of Africa. In that first Crisis, also, Du Bois described at some length a conference devoted to Africa held earlier in 1910 at Clark University in Massachusetts where black and white scholars delivered papers on "The Contributions of the Negro to Human Civilization" as well as others treating some aspect of reality in the Belgian Congo, Liberia, a French Africa, and British Africa. This problem was a constant theme in Du Bois' Crisis: its issue of June 1912 called attention to the recent death of D.J. Lenders, a leader of the African Political Organization in South Africa. Du Bois commended D.J. Lenders as a militant fighter "for full political and civil rights to all". In an editorial in the issue

of August 1913, Du Bois excoriated domination in South Africa "by means of theft, disfranchisement and slavery". He denounced the oppression of "the voteless and voiceless blacks who toil for dividends to support luxurious restaurants and churches and automobiles in London and New York." The issue of May 1922 paid great attention to a current strike of workers in South Africa. This was characteristic of Du Bois' editorship, because his Crisis was one of the very few publications in the United States to carry such news. In the issue for September 1930, Du Bois characterized the South African regime as "barbarous". And in the December 1933 issue, which was published shortly before Du Bois resigned his editorship, details concerning South African oppression again are offered and Du Bois concludes with the rhetorical question: "Who is civilized in South Africa and who is not?"

Thereafter, in Du Bois' writings for newspapers and periodicals, this theme of protesting colonialism and racism in Africa, and especially in South Africa, recurs. In the 1940s, Du Bois conducted a weekly column devoted entirely to news from Africa in Adam Clayton Powell's newspaper in Harlem called People's Voice. Quite typical of Du Bois' writings there was his column dated 14 October 1947. There he described South Africa as "this medieval slave-ridden oligarchy" which is ludicrously "placed in the front ranks of the 'democracies' of the world". Again, in the issue of 20 December 1947, one finds Du Bois denouncing "the racist, anti-democratic and intensely exploitative situation" in South Africa.

In New Africa, the organ of the Council on African Affairs, which Du Bois co-chaired with Paul Robeson from 1948, in the issue dated January 1949, Du Bois again condemned the "oppressive and racist rule" in South Africa and urged "effective action by the United Nations and the creation of a democratic society in South Africa". Du Bois' article in this periodical, dated May-June 1950, was entitled "Repression Madness Rules South Africa". It noted that New Africa was banned in South Africa. Du Bois reiterated his certainty that within the next fifty years, the black majority in South Africa would "take over this wretched and reactionary section of the world and make it into a new democratic state". In the 1950s many of his columns in the then progressive weekly, the National Guardian, published in New York City, were devoted to African history and especially to the struggles of the African peoples. In one of his final columns published on 20 September 1960, a year before his departure for Ghana, Du Bois warned that if "racism and super-exploitation persist" in South Africa it "may well be the place wherein a new world war begins".

These newspaper columns were necessarily very brief. Du Bois was one of the earliest authors in the United States who managed to publish full length in leading journals and present critical examinations of the colonialism that characterized European and United States relations with Africa. Two of these essays have assumed really classical positions in the relevant literature.

First, there is the remarkable essay on "The African Roots of the War" published in the Atlantic Monthly for May 1915. With

the hindsight provided to us by the passage of sixty-five years, one detects certain philosophic idealism and, politically, certain classlessness and therefore a kind of naiveté and moral exhortation. One must, however, recall that this analysis appeared two years prior to Lenin's Imperialism and that one would be hard put to find so incisive an examination of its subject matter in any language at that time. For example, here are two paragraphs from this essay--published, the reader will bear in mind, less than one year after the start of First World War:

What, then, are we to do, who desire peace and the civilization of all men? Hitherto the peace movement has confined itself chiefly to figures about the cost of war and platitudes on humanity. What do nations care about the cost of war, if by spending a few hundred millions in steel and gunpowder they can gain a thousand millions in diamonds and cocoa? How can love of humanity appeal as a motive to nations whose love of luxury is built on the inhuman exploitation of human beings, and who, especially in recent years, have been taught to regard these human beings as inhuman?...

We, then, who want peace, must remove the real causes of war. We have extended gradually our conception of democracy beyond our social class to all social classes in our nation; we have gone further and extended our democratic ideals not simply to all classes of our own nation, but to those other nations of our blood and lineage--to what we call "European" civilization. If we want real peace and lasting culture, however, we must go further. We must extend the democratic ideal to the yellow, brown and black peoples.

Du Bois here noted that colonialism treated its victims "as beasts of burden"; he insisted that: "We shall not drive war from this world until we treat them as free and equal citizens in a world-democracy of all races and nations". He demanded that "the ruling of one people for another people's whim or gain must stop", or wars would recur. With passion and eloquence, he concluded this pioneering analysis:

Twenty centuries after Christ, black Africa prostrate, raped, and shamed, lies at the feet of the conquering Philistines of Europe. Beyond the awful sea a black woman is weeping and waiting with her sons on her breast. What shall the end be? The world-old and fearful things: War and Wealth, Murder and Luxury? Or shall it be a new thing--a new peace and new democracy of all races: a great humanity of equal men?

The other of the two major efforts appeared in Foreign Affairs for July 1943, and its title conveyed its essence: "The Realities in Africa: European Profit or Negro Development?" In this essay Du Bois gave short shrift to the propaganda concerning racial "inferiority". "We must come back", he wrote, "to dollars, pounds, marks and francs". The reality was: "The process of

exploitation that culminated in the British, French and German empires before the First World War, turned out to be an investment whose vast returns depended on cheap labour under strict colonial control, without too much interference from mawkish philanthropy".

The analytical advance over the 1915 essays is conveyed in this paragraph:

Unless the question of racial status is frankly and intelligently faced it will become a problem not simply of Africa but of the world. More than the welfare of the blacks is involved. As long as there is in the world a reservoir of cheap labour that can raise the necessary raw materials, and as long as arrangements can be made to transport these raw materials to manufacturing countries, this body of cheap labour will compete directly or indirectly with European labour and will be often substituted for European labour. This situation will increase the power of investors and employers over the political organization of the state, leading to agitation and revolt within the state on the part of the labouring classes and to wars between states which are competing for domination over these sources of profit. And if the fiction of inferiority is maintained, there will be added to all this the revolt of the suppressed races themselves, who, because of their low wages, are the basic cause of the whole situation.

The logical conclusion of the analysis was phrased this way:

The social development of Africa for the welfare of Africans, with educated Africans in charge of the programme, would certainly interfere with the private profits of foreign investment and would ultimately change the entire relationship of Africa to the modern world. Is the development of Africa for the welfare of Africans the aim? Or is the aim a world dominated by Anglo-Saxons, or at least by the stock of white Europe? If the aim is to keep Africa in subjection just as long as possible, will it not plant the seeds of future hatreds and more war?

In his second tour of duty as a professor at Atlanta University, from 1934 to mid-1944, Du Bois managed to establish, in 1940, the scholarly quarterly Phylon. He edited it during its formative years until he left the University to take up work, again briefly, with the NAACP. With Du Bois as editor, this journal was crammed with material on Africa, notably in the contributions under his own signature. In the second issue of 1940, Du Bois wrote of the inequitable land distribution and of the very heavy penal laws in South Africa; in its third number he called attention to the outlawry in South Africa of union efforts by black workers.

In the last issue of 1940, Du Bois examined at some length various proposals for resolving the "native problem" in South Africa. He discussed parallelism, assimilation, or some device

for the total separation of black from white. He showed that none would or could work and that only a democratic and egalitarian society offered a lasting solution. Phylon for 1941, again especially in Du Bois' own writings, contains important information on the realities of oppression in South Africa and, especially on evidence of black resistance against this situation. South Africa, he summarized, in issue number 2 for 1942, has "the worst system of color caste in the world".

Another form of periodical writing by Du Bois was that of book reviews. Here, too, his concentration upon African materials, and especially South African ones, is notable. Two examples must suffice. In Crisis for October 1927, Du Bois reviewed Sidney Olivier's Anatomy of African Misery, published that year in London by Hogarth Press. Summarizing that important book, Du Bois wrote that "slavery and caste exploited by capitalistic imperialism spread over the whole Southern half of Africa". He concluded that "South Africa is wrecking civilization" and closed with his repeated warning: "South Africa is a menace to the peace of the world". In the scholarly, Marxist-oriented quarterly, Science & Society, for summer 1953, Du Bois reviewed E. Solly Sachs' The Choice before South Africa, published the preceding year in London by Turnstile Press. Noting that its author was a militant white South African radical forced into exile, Du Bois, after detailing the contents of the book, concluded that "the methods used by the Nazis in Germany were identical in every respect to those used by enemies of trade unions in South Africa".

Most of Du Bois' twenty published books dealt in some way with Africa and several were devoted entirely to that continent. Note has already been taken of his first book The Suppression of the African Slave Trade. In his biography of John Brown, first published in 1909, Du Bois did not fail to note that: "The mystic spell of Africa is and ever was over all America. It has guided her hardest work, inspired her finest literature, and sung her sweetest songs".

The Negro, one of the volumes in the Home University Library of Modern Knowledge, published in New York and London in 1915, is a brief and pioneering effort at depicting the entire scope of Africa's past. It also placed within this context the position of African-derived peoples in the United States, Latin America and the West Indies and showed the relationship between the exploitation of Africa and the rise of capitalism and imperialism in Europe and the United States.

Du Bois' second novel, Dark Princess, published by Harcourt Brace in New York in 1928, sought through fiction to convey to readers a conception of the depths of discontent in the world of coloured peoples and the critical need for significant change if catastrophic global violence were to be avoided. The plot is that of the development and failure of a world-wide conspiracy of people of colour, led by a Princess of India, to undo the domination of the globe by European and American States.

In the 1920s, "Little Blue Books", brief paperbacks which sold for five or ten cents and treated historical, philosophical and economic subjects, was an important publishing venture. It was published by a radical-oriented company known as Haldeman-Julius Publications, located in Girard, Kansas. In 1929, Du Bois was given the opportunity of producing two such "Little Blue Books", and they appeared the next year. Each was a 64-page booklet; one treated Africa, its Geography, People and Products while the other was concerned with Africa: its Place in Modern History. The second book was somewhat repetitious of The Negro, but it dealt only with Africa and concentrated, as its title indicates, upon the 19th and early 20th centuries. It placed Africa within the context of European power politics and showed its close connexion with the imperialism of the major powers. A feature of the little work is the great attention it pays to evidence of African resistance and initiative.

In the late 1930s, Du Bois was given the opportunity of completing a fuller study of Africa than he could accomplish in either the 1915 or the 1930 studies. The result of it was: Black Folk Then and Now: An Essay in the History and Sociology of the Negro Race published in New York by the Henry Holt & Company in 1939.

It was a volume of 400 pages containing sixteen chapters and an extensive bibliography. The volume opened with a history of Africa and a description of some of its major early civilizations. The United States and the West Indies were not neglected in the work, but most space was given to Africa. Its final four chapters concentrate upon modern Africa, especially upon questions of land ownership, condition of the working masses, systems of education and of political control. The final chapter, "The Future of the World Democracy", deals with major strikes and uprisings in the first third of the 20th century. Its concluding lines are:

The proletariat of the world consists not simply of white European and American workers but overwhelmingly of the dark workers of Asia, Africa, the islands of the sea, and South and Central America. These are the ones who are supporting a superstructure of wealth, luxury and extravagance. It is the rise of these people that is the rise of the world.

And then Du Bois repeated the words he first penned in 1900: "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line".

Upon Du Bois' return to the NAACP in 1944, in the position of Director of Special Research, he concentrated his efforts upon what he understood to be the purpose for which he was hired, namely, to turn the attention of as much of the world's population as he, and the NAACP could reach, to problems of colonialism

and especially to the question of the continued subjugation of most of Africa. One result was the appearance of a brief book: Color and Democracy: Colonies and Peace, published in New York by the Harcourt Brace & Company in 1945.

The premise of this book was that with the world to come after the Second World War, "the majority of the inhabitants of earth, who happen for the most part to be colored, must be regarded as having the right and the capacity to share in human progress and to become co-partners in that democracy which alone can ensure peace among men, by the abolition of poverty, the education of the masses, protection from disease and the scientific treatment of crime". The thought is developed that "colonies are the slums of the world", and that the slum dwellers are in righteous rebellion. If these slums are not ended, Du Bois warned, there would be not only these "justifiable revolts" but also "recurring wars of envy and greed because of the present inequitable distribution of gain among civilized nations". Statements from the Western Allies and their proposals such as those issuing from Dumbarton Oaks, showed a failure to consider the question of colonialism and the need for liberation; this was fatal, Du Bois insisted, for "so long as colonial imperialism exists, there can be neither peace on earth nor good will toward men". Du Bois took a positive view of the Soviet Union here, as he had from 1919 onwards, until his death, noting that it had not "like most nations, without effort to solve it, declared the insolubility of the problem of the poor, and above all, it has not falsely placed on the poor the blame of their wretched conditions".

Another volume resulted from Du Bois' position at the NAACP. This was: The World and Africa: An Inquiry into the Part which Africa has Played in World History, published by Viking in New York in 1947 and issued, with an additional hundred pages by International Publishers in New York City two years after his death.

The book began with a consideration of the meaning of the just concluded World War (its original preface was dated May 1946). It moved on to an analysis of the impact of European colonialism, especially in Africa, during the preceding two centuries and of the "rape of Africa" in the four centuries beginning with the mid-15th century. It was followed by a delineation of what Africa thus ravished had been: a history of Egypt, the Sudan, West and Central Africa and of Asia until the 16th century, and finally, an inquiry into "the future of the darker races" whose coming liberation was held to be "indispensable to the fertilizing of the universal soil of mankind". The final thought in the 1947 edition was: "There can be no perfect democracy curtailed by color race, or poverty. But with all we accomplish all, even Peace".

The 1965 edition, enriched with selections from periodical pieces by Du Bois in the 1950s (selected by the present writer)--

emphasized in particular the key role of United States corporations and banks--Morgan, Rockefeller, Ford, General Motors, General Electric, Firestone, after the Second World War in the continued exploitation of Africa and especially South Africa.

Du Bois' monumental fictional trilogy: The Black Flame, published in 1957, 1959 and 1961 by Mainstream Publishers in New York City, was a novelized autobiographical presentation of what it meant to be a black man in the United States from 1876 to 1956; it certainly does not neglect the consequence of Africa in general and its significance for Du Bois in particular.

His final volume, the posthumously published Autobiography (edited by the present writer), was written during the years 1958-1961 and was published in full in 1968 by International Publishers. Again, the central role of Pan-Africanism, of the effort in general by Du Bois to alert the world to the realities of Africa and the necessity of achieving its liberation, fills this book, as they had filled his incomparable life.

* * *

Du Bois was not only an editor, a skilled essayist, a poet and novelist, a superbly trained social scientist who produced lasting works in sociology and history, and a teacher who inspired hundreds of students during decades of instruction. Du Bois was also an agitator, an organizer, an activist in the struggles for the liberation of the Afro-American people, of the African peoples, of humanity and in the supreme effort he devoted to eliminating the scourge of war.

Note already has been taken of Du Bois' participation in the seminal 1900 Pan-African conference in London, his role in connexion with possible commercial relationship between black people in the United States and portions of Africa, going back to 1902, the relationship in 1904 with the Ethiopian Progressive Association, and the Pan-African commitment of the Niagara Movement, founded largely by Du Bois and headed by him until his dissolution and merging with the organization that became, in 1910, the NAACP. The development of Du Bois' idea of an Encyclopedia Africana by 1909 and the beginnings of his regular correspondence with African leaders and scholars at the turn of the 20th century were also observed.

In 1911, Du Bois participated in the First All-Races Congress held in England. There appeared leading figures from the entire world, including China, Japan, Haiti, India, Persia, Turkey, the British West Indies, Egypt, the Sudan and Western Africa. Du Bois played a central role in the proceedings of this meeting and made

lasting friendships. One of the basic conclusions of this Congress was that the idea of racism was as false as it was pernicious.

Towards the end of the First World War, colonial and oppressed peoples began to plan for a post-war world that might bring an end to colonialism and oppression. This very much included African and African-derived peoples. Du Bois devoted much effort to persuading the other leaders of the NAACP to devote some of the energies and funds of the organization to Pan-African efforts. He had some success, and his trip to Paris in 1919, funded by the NAACP, had among its objects the inquiry into conditions of U.S. black soldiers in France, gathering of material for a projected history of African and Afro-American participation in the War, and the holding of a Pan-African Congress.

Du Bois managed to get some support and even meagre funds for the latter from the British Labour Party and, with great difficulty, he was able to call and lead the first Pan-African meeting since that of 1900, in Paris in 1919. Most of the commercial press of Europe and the United States denounced the gathering as too radical; a few papers denounced it as Bolshevik-inspired! But it did meet, and an organization did come into existence. The idea of Pan-African unity in the struggle against colonialism and racism took on organizational form, never thereafter to expire.

The Second Pan-African Congress met in London, Paris and Brussels in 1921. Appropriate resolutions were made, old and new friendships created, and the concept of a permanent secretariat projected. The latter did not eventuate, nor did plans for an international journal in French and English dedicated to the movement. Still, with Du Bois as the driving force, another (Third) Pan-African Congress met in 1923 in Paris and Lisbon.

While there, Du Bois learned of his appointment by President Coolidge as Ambassador Extraordinary, representing the President of the United States at the 1924 inauguration of C.D. King as President of Liberia. Du Bois fulfilled this mission and again made new and renewed old ties. He used the occasion of his first visit to Africa to enter other West African areas, notably Sierra Leone. This actual observation of Africa made a profound impression upon Du Bois and found outlet in numerous newspaper columns, magazine articles and speeches heard in the United States by thousands of blacks and whites.

Du Bois set his mind upon holding the Fourth Congress in Africa, and for a time it appeared that France would agree upon Tunis as a venue. This, however, was finally rejected. Britain and France also turned down requests for the holding of the conference in the West Indies. A result was that the Fourth Congress was not held until 1927 and then took place in New York City, with not only Du Bois' participation but also the active work of several black women in the United States, notably Mary Church Terrell and Addie W. Hunton.

One result of Du Bois' visits in the 1920s to European museums and to Africa itself was his intense interest in the great wood and metal art work and music of the African continent. Du Bois played a central role in promoting appreciation of these facets of African culture from 1924 to 1928 as part of the so-called Harlem Renaissance of that period.

Soon after 1927, the Great Depression, harmful to white people but catastrophic to black folk, made Du Bois concentrate his mind and activities upon the United States, although, as earlier pages have shown, he continued to publish on Africa throughout the 1930s.

With the Second World War, Du Bois again turned his attention to Africa and the question of colonialism and the struggle for peace. As already shown, Africa was a major concern of Du Bois during his service with Phylon magazine between 1940 and 1944. When in 1944 he returned to the NAACP he did so with the idea of devoting all of his energies to the battle against colonialism and, in particular, to the liberation of the African continent.

In this role, he not only produced the articles and books already mentioned, dealing directly with Africa. Along with Walter White and Mary McLeod Bethune, he also served as Consultant to the United States delegation at the founding of the United Nations in 1945.

In private and public speeches and in letters and published writings, Du Bois maintained his anti-colonial position and affirmed his disappointment with the Western Powers and the United States. He asserted that they were not taking an anti-colonial stance, but on the contrary, seemed to be assuming that the post-war world in that regard, would be similar to the world of 1939.

It was Du Bois' opposition to the Truman foreign policy of United States hegemony that finally determined Du Bois' removal, late in 1947, from his position with the NAACP. The leadership of that organization and especially Walter White himself, became part of the Truman bandwagon.

Du Bois joined Paul Robeson as leader of the heroic work of the Council on African Affairs, which was the voice in the United States keeping alive opposition to colonialism in Africa and particularly to the infamous regime in South Africa. Though well past eighty, Du Bois agreed to run for United States Senator from New York State in 1950; he made this an educational effort against colonialism and for disarmament and peace. While his American Labor Party candidacy was not successful, he did manage to get over 200,000 votes, according to the official count.

In this same period, Du Bois undertook the leadership of the struggle in the United States against atomic armaments and for world peace. In this connexion he headed the Peace Information

Center, responsible for gathering, in face of the McCarthyite terror, well over two million signatures in the United States appealing for the banning of the A-Bomb. Meanwhile, in 1946 Du Bois had headed a resurrected Pan-African movement and tightened close connexions with figures like Nkrumah, Azikiwe and Kenyatta.

A Washington gone quite beserk actually indicted Dr. Du Bois and four others as "unregistered foreign agents" because of the heroic work in connexion with the Peace Information Center. World-wide protest and outrage at this atrocious act induced Washington to attempt to offer Du Bois a "deal": If he would admit guilt, the Government would assure him a suspended sentence. Du Bois indignantly rejected this in a letter to his attorneys and stated that he would rather rot in jail for the rest of his life than agree to a lie with such an administration for such a purpose.

The world-wide protest movement was successful and Du Bois and his fellow defendants were acquitted in this first great legal setback to McCarthyism.

Du Bois' lectures and world-wide travels, his leadership in the anti-war movement and his writings in favour of peace and against colonialism, continued throughout the 1950s. It was in 1960 that President Nkrumah of Ghana invited Du Bois to Accra to undertake the setting up of a secretariat that would finally produce an Encyclopaedia Africana. The present writer had the honour to drive Dr. and Mrs. Du Bois to the airport for the flight to Ghana in October 1961, to undertake this formidable task.

I recall that a reporter at the airport asked Du Bois how many volumes he projected for the work. Du Bois replied that he thought ten stout volumes would be sufficient. How long would each volume's production take, the reporter asked. Du Bois, then 93 years old, responded with just the hint of a smile: "I should think it will take me about ten years per volume".

While in Accra, Du Bois advanced the project considerably. In addition, he continued to be asked to give advice to leaders of the burgeoning African liberation movements which he did in public speeches, articles and in private communications.

Shortly before leaving for Accra, Du Bois had come to the decision that the programme and ideas of the Communist Party of the United States were nearest to his own views. With the warlike policy of Washington and its persecution of radicals and Communists, Du Bois decided that it might be some contribution to peace and sanity if he were not only to join that Party but to do so with a public announcement of the fact. He did it on 1 October 1961, and the act did gain worldwide attention. It heartened fighters for peace and equality in the United States and it served to embarrass

ruling powers in the United States.

In Ghana, the United States consulate refused to renew Dr. Du Bois' passport. Under the terms of the McCarran Act, which was then still in force, it was a crime subject to ten years' imprisonment for a communist to have a passport! The result was that, having inquired with President Nkrumah, Dr. and Mrs. Du Bois abandoned their United States citizenship and became citizens of Ghana.

When Du Bois died in August 1963 at the age of 95, President Nkrumah ordered a State funeral for this Father of the modern black liberation movement and of the African liberation movement. Representatives of all embassies and consulates were officially represented, except that of the United States.

Du Bois said in his last message--characteristically he had prepared this some time earlier--read at the grave-site by his wife Shirley Graham Du Bois:

I have loved my work, I have loved people and my play, but always I have been uplifted by the thought that what I have done well will live long and justify my life; that what I have done ill or never finished can now be handed on to others for endless days to be finished, perhaps better than I could have done.

"Peace", he said, in this final word, "will be my applause".

He added:

One thing alone I charge you. As you live, believe in life. Always human beings will live and progress to greater, broader and fuller life. The only possible death is to lose belief in this truth simply because the great end comes slowly, because time is long.

* * *

The accomplishments of this Titan assure immortality. His ideas, his prophecies, his admonitions, his examples, are adornments to the record of the human race. One of his great dreams--the full liberation of what he called his Motherland, his Africa--has not yet been realized although, thanks in considerable part to his work, a very great deal has been accomplished. All of it will be accomplished, probably within this twentieth century, as he once projected. Above all, in this regard, stands yet the abomination of apartheid South Africa, but its doom is written in the stars. It is for those of us who remain and who comprehend and cherish the legacy of Du Bois, to finish the great work he had begun and so mightily advanced; in particular to bring a fully democratic and egalitarian social order to South Africa and therefore to immeasurably advance the prospects for a stable world peace.