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From: Provisional Committee to Restore Paul Robeson's Passport
139 W. 125th St., Suite 6, New York 27, N. Y.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORLD PROTESTS MOUNT OVER LATEST STATE DEPARTMENT
REFUSAL OF ROBESON PASSPORT

As news of the U. S. State Department's refusal of Paul Robeson's most recent application for a passport spreads, new scores of protests and pledges of support are streaming into the office of the Provisional Committee to Restore Paul Robeson's Passport from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, South America, Canada and Australia.

Mr. Robeson's application for a passport to travel to England, Israel, France and Scandinavia was submitted July 2. The State Department reply of July 27, signed by R. B. Shipley, Director of the Passport Office, said that the issue of a passport was "precluded" under passport regulations "upon the basis of information which the Department has received from various sources." Paul Robeson states he will appeal this decision to the U. S. Supreme Court, if necessary, on constitutional grounds.

"This fight is not a personal one alone," he said, "but one that affects an increasing number of artists, scholars and others, particularly of my own people, who are now being denied passports. In this fight for my constitutional rights I now shall extend my request. Not only do I want to visit the places already mentioned, but to accept invitations from many peace groups all over the world, including India, China, the Soviet Republics, many South American and Caribbean countries and Africa. This I shall do in the interest of cultural exchange so vital to the easing of world tensions."

The following excerpts from a few of the hundreds of messages of support and copies of protests to the State Department and U. S. Embassies over the world coming into the Provisional Committee indicate that world opinion is with Paul Robeson:

From 75 African, Indian and white cultural and civic leaders in Johannesburg, South Africa: "When the United States Government deprived you of your passport, they deprived the people of the world of your wonderful voice. It is not a personal move against you - it was a political move of world-wide importance.

"To us you represent the real America, the true America - not of the H-Bomb, McCarthy, blood and thunder comics and Mickey Spillane - but of the love of peace and real culture that we know exists among ordinary people everywhere. By preventing you from travelling, your Government is depriving itself of its finest ambassador."

From Negombo, Ceylon: "To us in this faraway but lovely tropical Island of Ceylon, the name of Paul Robeson is honored ... His birthday is always commemorated by the Robeson Society here which has many hundreds of members ... In fact his voice and personality have left an abiding imprint on the heart of Ceylon. The Robeson fans in Ceylon, like those all the world over, look forward to the day when this great singer will be able to tour this physically doomed and spiritually dead planet, and with his heaven-endowed voice rouse the soul of mankind to arise and save itself."

From Ivor Montagu, well-known English author: "In name of Magna Carta by which already in Thirteenth Century Englishmen won right of unimpeded travel from and to their homeland and whose tradition is shared by and links our two countries, I wish joy and success to campaign to restore that right to Paul. May his noble voice and presence soon bring us and other folks much needed reminder (of) fundamental virtues and character of American people whose best and greatest ambassador he will ever be."

From Fucikove, Vice-President Czechoslovak Peace Committee: "Express solidarity your campaign."

From a long list of the best known artists of Indian to the Embassy in Delhi: "The Indian people demand that the passport of Paul Robeson be restored to him, and that no fetters be put in his way to move from continent to continent singing his songs of freedom and peace, bringing joy and hope to millions of people all over the world."

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From the Building Workers' Industrial Union of Melbourne, Australia, to the State Department in Washington: "We write in respect to the withholding of a passport by the State Department from the American singer and actor, Paul Robeson. This is against Article 13 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that 'Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country,' and the United States of America, being one of the Great Powers, is expected to give leadership to the rest of the world in putting the United Nations Charter into effect.

"In addition, we are of the opinion that the exchange of culture between countries is one of the strongest means of building world peace; and because of the universal love of music by all people and the very high degree of artistry achieved by Paul Robeson, he could be of the greatest service to his country in helping to forge a link of friendship between America and other countries."

From the renowned African novelist Rene Maran, in Paris: "My heart and spirit are with you in the campaign which you are waging for the granting of all citizenship rights to the great Paul Robeson... Are they (the government) never to understand that they cannot set themselves up as the defender of free peoples while denying the most elementary right to one of the most illustrious of their sons?"

From a member of the House of Commons in London: "Your State Department surely cannot any longer be under any illusions as to the harm being created by the withholding of Paul Robeson's passport... In paying tribute to an artist who has delighted and enthralled me and my friends, I beg America to appreciate the harm to our western way of life, which is being caused by this denial of freedom and this resort to economic strangulation."

From the Staff of the Bulgarian Cinematography, Sofia: "Our appeal to the American Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to restore Paul Robeson's passport and to give him license for foreign concerts, so that, through him, the peoples of the world may have the possibility to lay the foundations of cultural exchange and strengthen friendship and peace in the world."

From Haifa, Israel, comes this ringing, simple appeal: "As a simple woman without political orientation I am deeply concerned by the fact that your Government is denying lawful passport to the beloved and famous singer Paul Robeson. The songs of Paul Robeson have always inspired me with a feeling of brotherhood and love for your people and I have always regarded Paul Robeson a pride to his country.

"Therefore as a mother of children I appeal to you that country and Government be like a true mother to her children and citizens without prejudice to their convictions or race and restore the honour of the United States of America by restoring without delay the passport to our beloved Paul Robeson."

From 50 signators of the Staff of the National Library of Paris to John Foster Dulles: "The undersigned, members of the staff of the National Library of Paris, having diverse political, philosophical and religious beliefs, having learned that the great American artist, Paul Robeson, has been refused his passport and permission to travel abroad, we wish to intercede and urge your reconsideration of this question, divorcing it from all political considerations. We are aware of the tremendous renown of Paul Robeson and believe that the ban placed upon this artist singing in foreign lands can only harm the cause of the United States. We hope that the State Department will appreciate this point of view of sincere friends of the great American people and will allow other peoples to hear once more this master of vocal music who honors America."

From Henri Jourdain of the World Federation of Trade Unions, Vienna: "The undemocratic action of the State Department is an insult to all peoples. The world's workers who know and love the voice of Paul Robeson are with you. They express to him their solidarity and protest energetically against this discriminatory act on the part of the American authorities."

From Jean Laffitte, General Secretary of the World Peace Council, Vienna: "We are certain that this campaign will get broad support in the different countries and we ardently hope that your work will be successful. It is a valuable contribution to the efforts of all defenders of peace to develop cultural and artistic exchanges and to strengthen friendship between the peoples, particularly between the people of the United States and the other peoples of the world."

From the People's Progressive Party, Georgetown, British Guiana: "Accept wholehearted support in efforts to restore your rights. Best wishes for a successful campaign."

From writers and intellectuals of Montevideo, Uruguay: "It is impossible that at this hour when all of the people of the world want to establish and strengthen cultural and fraternal relations, that such a great artist, universally loved and admired, should be prevented from leaving his country because of policies hostile to culture, to individual rights and to the friendship of peoples."

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ROBESON SINGS THIRD BORDER CONCERT

The artistry of Paul Robeson winged unimpeded across an international frontier with the appearance of the world-beloved singer and actor in his third annual concert in beautiful Peace Arch Park on the United States-Canadian border.

Although denied a passport to appear in their countries, Robeson sang to friends from many lands as the audience was swelled by athletes and visitors from all parts of the British Commonwealth who are in Vancouver for the famous Empire Games.

The many thousands who made the annual pilgrimage to the Peace Arch spread out across the smooth green lawn, up the gentle flower-splashed slope, which make the park a natural amphitheater, and overflowed into the trees rimming the eastern boundary. Estimates ranged from fifteen to twenty thousand. However, a Canadian Mounted Police check of 8,000 cars lends weight to the larger figure.

Although the informality and warmth of an outdoor affair remained, Robeson, this year, sang a complete, formal concert program ranging from the beloved spirituals of his people, the folk music of many lands, to the somberly dramatic "Prayer and Death" excerpt from Moussorgsky's "Boris Godunov". The artist freely admitted that he had some doubts as to the suitability of this selection for a huge, outdoor audience, but these soon vanished. The audience loved it and cheered when the singer expressed the hope that he would soon be able to present it on the opera stage of Europe and "even in my own country."

Since its inception the annual border concert has been linked to the fight to force the U. S. State Department to rescind its ban on Robeson's passport. The first was held when the singer was unable to get permission to leave the U. S. to appear in a Vancouver, B. C., concert sponsored by the Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers. If Robeson cannot come to us, the union said, we will go to him. So the great artist went to the border and the people flocked to hear him. Each year Mine Mill has sponsored the concert.

This year the union put out an elaborate, printed program which contained greetings from many Canadian trade union and fraternal groups. Included as well were some of the messages from personages all over the world protesting the passport ban. Harvey Murphy, Mine Mill regional director, introduced Robeson as a "great American who is loved throughout the world."

As a special tribute to the fighting traditions of the Canadian union, Robeson presented a reading of the scene "I Speak for Joe Hill" from the play "The Man Who Never Died" by Barry Stavis. And the program included, as it does every year, a request for "Joe Hill". In response to the greetings from Murphy the singer pledged to his audience that he will "press for the freedom of Africa and all colonial people" and will "keep fighting for the dignity of my people and all people."

During an intermission a young Australian athlete paid tribute to Robeson and presented him with gifts from the youth movement of that country. The gifts included a boomerang and Australian Empire Games pin.

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RECORDS RELATING TO THE 'TREASON TRIAL' (REGINA vs F. ADAMS AND OTHERS ON CHARGE OF HIGH TREASON, ETC.), 1956 1961

TREASON TRIAL, 1956 1961

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