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P.F. 44990.

CROSS-REFERENCE.

Subject:— Paul ROBESON.

S.B. reported on 24.9.35, under 301/MP/3456, that
Larry BROWN, a contact of Nancy CUNARD, was employed
as pianist to Paul ROBESON.

Original in P.F. 40304 (CUNARD) Vol. 7, 376a. dated 24.9.35.
M. J. E. B.
21.5.36.

S. Form 81

✓
MJE
21/5/36

CROSS-REFERENCE.

Subject: Paul and Essie ROBESON.

On 31.8.35 Ivor MONTAGU wrote to Paul ROBESON, 19, Buckingham Street, W.C.2, asking him to become a member of the Patronage Committee of the Congress of Peace and Friendship with the U.S.S.R., London.

Essie (Mrs.Paul) ROBESON informed Ivor MONTAGU that Paul ROBESON would be glad to join the Committee.

Original in O.F.20/2, Vol.7, 395b. dated 31.8.35.
M.J.E.B.
21.5.36.

4th April 1935.

Dear Colonel Villiers,

Many thanks for your letter No.C.12/222/55 of 6th March 1935 forwarding a copy of a cutting from "The Cape Argus" regarding the proposed visit of Paul ROBESON to South Africa.

So far there have not been any indications that Paul ROBESON has taken more than a purely academic interest in Communism. He is a member of the Advisory Council of the 'Left Theatre', a theatre which has recently been formed with the object of performing, mainly in working class districts, plays which profess 'to express the life and struggles of the workers'. You may, however, perhaps care to see the following extract which appeared recently in "The Negro Worker", Vol.5, No.2-3, dated February-March 1935:

"Paul ROBESON visits Soviet Russia."

Paul ROBESON, internationally known Negro singer and actor paid a visit to Soviet Russia in January and has made public his unreserved praise for the Soviet Union.

Mr ROBESON's chief aim, it is reported, is to settle with his family in the Soviet Union, indefinitely, where he will study, not only the Russian theatre and drama in which he is especially interested, but also the whole new social system which has been established in workers Russia.

Mr ROBESON quite enthusiastically remarked that the new life, new culture, new economy and the new people compelled his admiration. He also expressed the opinion that the whole future of the coloured peoples is tied up with conditions in Soviet Russia, Soviet Asia and the young and rising Soviet China which he says has a resemblance to the situation in Africa.

He declared that he selected the Soviet Union as his future home as the proper centre from which he can conduct his studies and research work because it is the 'only country giving unstintingly the social and other environment' in which he can work with freedom and facility towards a new form of artistic expression and that he was 'more than satisfied' that the Soviet Union is just such a place."

In the event of anything further coming to notice regarding Paul ROBESON's interest in Communism, I will send it on to you.

Yours sincerely,

Col. Vernon Kell.

ARRIVAL

(6a)

Copy of Card in Traffic Index.

Port of Embarkation

abroad

Esbjerg

Name *ROBERTSON Paul*

Age *36* Sex _____

Names and ages of dependants under 16 accompanying _____

Occupation *Passenger & Actor*

Nationality *U.S.A.* Nationality at Birth _____

Proposed address in United Kingdom *11 Buckingham Sq. London, W.1*

O. Stamp No. _____ Port *Hastings 18-1-35*

Description of Passenger and class travelled _____

Other information *to be returned to 31/3/35*

C/L to 31-3-35

£2285) Wt 20184/820 5,000(2) 10/34 H & SP Gp 642
X2854) Wt 27704/939 5,000(2) 1/85

MW
5/4/35



SUID-AFRIKAANSE POLISIE.
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE.

KANTOOR VAN DIE KOMMISSARIS,
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER,

PRETORIA.

CONFIDENTIAL.

6th March, 1935.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith
copy of a cutting from "The Cape Argus", dated 26.1.35
in connection with a proposed visit of the well-known
Negro singer PAUL ROBESON to South Africa towards the
end of this year.

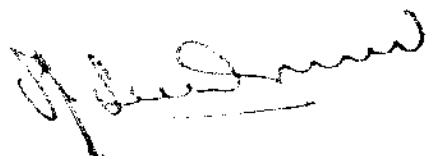
Rumour has it in this country that this
has turned communist and has recently visited Russia.

I would very much appreciate any information
you might be able to give me in this connection.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant


THE COMMISSIONER OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE.

Col. Sir Vernon Kell,
Box No. 500,
Parliament Street, B.O.,
London, S.W.1.,
England.

PAUL ROBESON TO VISIT UNION.
FIRST-HAND IMPRESSIONS FOR A FILM.
TO SHARE THE LIFE OF THE NATIVES.
INMATE OF A COMPOUND ON THE FARM.

Paul Robeson, the world-famous negro singer, will visit South Africa towards the end of this year. And he contemplates living the life of an African native, both in the towns and in the Reserves. Johannesburg will see him, as an inmate of a compound.

This is the news brought from Europe by ^{H.S. 46350} Mr. W.G. Ballinger, well known for his activities as adviser to the I.C.U. in the past, who has just returned in the *Guilio Cesare*, accompanied by his wife, formerly Miss Margaret Hodgson of the Witwatersrand University staff, to whom he was married during a six months visit overseas. Mr. Ballinger has come back to South Africa under the auspices of a recently constituted body known as the "Friends of Africa" of 533/2.

IMPRESSIONS FOR A FILM.

"Paul Robeson," said Mr Ballinger in an interview with a representative of *The Argus* to-day, "has just finished making a film 'Sanders of the River', and he is anxious to gather first-hand impressions of African life and of the wild rhythm of African music for another picture. But in the meantime he has gone on a visit to Russia. He has become much more politically minded lately. In a recent article in the "*Daily Herald*" he declared that the black man had more in common with the yellow than with the white race - a symptomatic trend of which South Africa should take due note.

"He is coming to South Africa not only to study its music, but to see the conditions of the black man and whether he can do anything to help them. He is deeply concerned at the repression of the African, and thinks that it contrasts remarkably with the expression of liberalism made by South African statesmen when abroad. He intends to share in the life of the African in the kraal and in the compound

COLOUR PROBLEMS ?

What colour problems will be caused by Paul Robeson's visit to the Union? He almost alone of the non-Europeans in London has never felt the stigma of the colour bar because of his great fame as an artist; but some while ago leading hotels, at the instigation of some of South Africans and Americans, were refusing to take in coloured people.

"The colour problem in Britain hardened considerably some time ago", said Mr. Ballinger, "but now it is softening again. The people of London are beginning to think that they have not given a fair deal to the coloured. Just before I left, my wife and I had lunch at Bulestin's, a well known restaurant in the Strand, with Professor Harold Lasky, Winifred Holtby and Mr. and Mrs. Robeson. There was no objection to their presence.

A CARDIFF CONTROVERSY.

"But there has been differentiation as regards coloured people employed. Cardiff - which is called the 'Cape Town of Britain' and 'the sunshine' - has a considerable coloured population. In Cardiff there has been recently a controversy over the fact that coloured people employed were paid 2s. a week less than white unemployed. Apparently this situation arose as the result of the means test, when the Mayor of Cardiff stated that coloured people could live on less than the white. Yet the coloured had to pay the same contribution to unemployment insurance as the white."

Discussing Europe to-day, Mr. Ballinger said: "

ent of in national jealousies which threaten at a
to break out in armed conflict. Africa, despite its acute
problems, is comparatively peaceful. There is now what is rec
as a permanent army of over 2,000,000 unemployed in Britain.

"South of Nottingham and the River Trent there is comparat.
little unemployment. To the north, however, one passes through a
series of stagnant, once-busy hives of industry, literally valleys
desolation. Yet there is not the poverty that followed in the wake
of industrial depression some 20 years ago, owing largely to the de-
velopment of the national social services.

"In London and the southern counties of England houses are not
being built with gas and bomb-proof shelters.

INTEREST IN AFRICA

"Organised Communism in Britain is negligible as either an
industrial or political factor. There is considerable interest in
African affairs.

"Informed opinion on the question of the transference of the
Protectorates to the Union is veering to the point of view that
economically, as they are at present administered, they are depend
on the Union. There is, however, the moral issue that the Union's
native policy is considered repressive and that in consequence Brit
would at this stage be betraying a trust if she handed over the Pro-
tec rates to the Union.

"It is, however, fully recognised that this question must be
settled at an early date. Britain must either reorganise the adminis-
tration of these territories and develop them or give them to the
Union. They cannot remain as they are. I personally hope that they
will be developed on co-operative lines on the basis of a native
peasant proprietorship.

4533/2.

Discussing this new body, the ["Friends of Africa"], Mr. Ballinger
er said that its objects are to conduct research work, further the
spread of co-operative ideas among natives, and non-Europeans, in
Southern Africa with a view to the formation of a co-operative union
without a colour bar, and to disseminate information on African
affairs to the people in Europe. In connection with this work and
cognate African problems, Mr. Ballinger addressed or lectured while
in Europe, to 46 organisations, among which were the African Circle
at Chatham House, the London School of Economics, Ruskin College,
Oxford, a Negro Conference in London and a conference of the Women's
Women's International League.

CROSS-REFERENCE.

Subject:— Paul ROBESON.

According to information taken from an article entitled "The Left Theatre", which appeared in "The Patriot" of 26.4.34, Paul ROBESON was a member of the Advisory Council of the Left Theatre.

Original in O.F.17/7, 14a. dated 26.4.34.
M.J.E.B.
21.5.36.

CROSS-REFERENCE.

Subject:— Paul ROBESON.

Extract from report of meeting of the League of Coloured Peoples held in London on 5.6.33, compiled by the League against Imperialism and forwarded by BRIDGEMAN to Arnold WARD on 15.9.33:—

"Mr. Paul ROBESON, the famous actor, startled many of those who heard him by denying that there was any discrimination against coloured persons in Britain. Any prejudice, he said, that may exist is due to the presence of Americans in this country..."

A copy of this report was sent to S.B., I.P.I. and C.O. on 22.9.33.

Original in O.F.26/6, Vol.2, 160a, 161a. dated 15.9.33: 22.9.33.
M.J.E.B.
21.5.36.

CROSS-REFERENCE.

Subject: Mrs. Paul ROBESON.

According to literature obtained by S.11 on 15.5.33,
Mrs. Paul ROBESON joined the London Group on African
Affairs during 1932.

Original in P.F.41767 (LIVIE-NOBLE) 5a. dated 15.5.33.
M.J.E.B.
21.5.36.