

This Failed

Wisc. voted against it
6-2

Resolution: W.E.B. DuBois Clubs

FACT: U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach, in a petition to the Subversive Activities Control Board on Friday, March 4, charged that the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs of America were created and are controlled by the United States Communist Party.

"Under the 1950 Subversive Activities Control Act, the board will conduct hearings on the Communist-front charges. If the group is found to be Communist-dominated, it will be required to list its officers and the sources and distribution of its funds and printing equipment." (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Saturday, March 5, 1966, p. 8A).

The W.E.B. DuBois Clubs are a national organization with over 70 chapters in major cities and on college campuses. The Justice Department estimates total membership in the clubs at 2,800. The clubs have been active in the protest movement against the war in Viet Nam and have frequently co-sponsored demonstrations with the Students for a Democratic Society, the May Second Movement, the Berkeley Viet Nam Day Committee, the Madison-based National Coordinating Committee to End the War in Viet Nam, and other "new left" groups.

PRINCIPLE: "In their efforts to identify and punish 'subversive' elements within the population, American governmental agencies have sometimes engaged in practices unworthy of a free democracy. USNSA believes that the governmental practices which automatically and indelibly brand as 'subversive' members of many dissenting organizations or those who have refused on Constitutional grounds to testify before a Congressional Committee, which deny American citizens freedom to travel abroad solely because of their political associations or beliefs, which restrict to certain countries the right of free travel, which disenfranchise or extradite naturalized citizens for their political associations and beliefs, which authorizes the deportation of purportedly 'subversive' aliens without judicial hearing, and which dictates to unions standards of political association and belief, denying them the right to freely elect their officers, are not consonant with the standards of human freedom and dignity embodied within the U.S. Constitution. (USNSA Basic Policy Declaration, "National Security and Civil Liberties", Declaration, par. 2).

DECLARATION: 1. The Ill.-Wis. Region of USNSA objects to the tactic of publicly labelling an organization a Communist-front before legal proceedings to determine the nature and sponsorship of the organization have begun. The use of this tactic has resulted in the unjust persecution of all members of such organizations regardless of their individual political beliefs.

2. Even in the event that the Subversive Activities Control Board finds that the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs are "Communist-dominated", the Ill.-Wis. Region of USNSA holds that the presence of individual Communists in the organization in no way establishes that the policies of the organization are designed to advance the interests of a foreign power or to subvert or overthrow the United States government.

3. The Ill.-Wis. Region of USNSA feels that any individual or group should be allowed to organize for peaceful political purposes without intimidation or restriction. Consequently the Ill.-Wis. Region of USNSA deplores the use of the Subversive Activities Control Act to limit the rights of the DuBois Clubs members to free political expression.

4. The Ill.-Wis. Region of USNSA further deplores that the effect of the proceedings against the W.E.B. DuBois Clubs will be to restrict legitimate expression of political dissent against the conduct of the war in Viet Nam. In a democracy, the right to object by peaceful and non-violent means to policies of the current government must be sacrosanct.

MANDATE: The Ill.-Wis. Region of USNSA mandates the Secretary to distribute this resolution to appropriate officials of the United States government, the national office of USNSA, and to DuBois Club headquarters in San Francisco, New York and Chicago.