

PART IV

Summary and Prayer

In which the case is briefly reviewed and prayers are made to the General Assembly for such action as will condemn and prevent the crime of genocide now being committed against the Negro people of the United States.

Summary and Prayer

THERE may be debate as to the expediency of condemning the Government of the United States for the genocide it practices and permits against the 15,000,000 of its citizens who are Negroes. There can be none about the existence of the crime. It is an undeniable fact. The United States Government itself, through the Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights quoted earlier, admits the institutionalized Negro oppression, written into the law, and carried out by police and courts. It describes it, examines it, surveys it, writes about it, talks about it, and does everything but change it. It both admits it and protects it.

Thus it was easy for your petitioners to offer abundant proof of the crime. It is everywhere in American life. And yet words and statistics are but poor things to convey the long agony of the Negro people. We have proved "killing members of the group"—but the case after case after case cited does nothing to assuage the helplessness of the innocent Negro trapped at this instant by police in a cell which will be the scene of his death. We have shown "mental and bodily harm" in violation of Article II of the Genocide Convention but this proof can barely indicate the life-long terror of thousands on thousands of Negroes forced to live under the menace of official violence, mob law and the Ku Klux Klan. We have tried to reveal something of the deliberate infliction "on the group of conditions which bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part"—but this cannot convey the hopeless despair of those forced by law to live in conditions of disease and poverty because of race, of birth, of color. We have shown incitements to commit genocide, shown that a conspiracy exists to commit it, and now we can only add that an entire people, not only unprotected by their government but the object of government-inspired violence, reach forth their hands to the General Assembly in appeal. Three hundred years is a long time to wait. And

now we ask that world opinion, that the conscience of mankind as symbolized by the General Assembly of the United Nations turn not a deaf ear to our entreaty.

We plead as patriotic Americans, knowing that any act that can aid in removing the incubus of United States oppression of the American Negro people from our country is the highest patriotism. The American Dream was for justice, justice for all men, regardless of race, creed, or color. He who betrays it, betrays our country, betrays the world itself since the United States is a power in it for good or for evil.

We speak, too, as world citizens, certain that if the forces of predatory reaction are allowed to continue their present policies, are allowed to continue a profitable genocide against Americans, the time will not be long removed, the world being what it is, that the same forces will practice genocide on a wider scale against the nationals of other nations. So we plead not for ourselves alone but for all mankind. We plead not only for an end of the crime of genocide against the Negro people of the United States but we plead, too, for peace.

If the General Assembly acts as the conscience of mankind and therefore acts favorably on our petition, it will have served the cause of peace, the protection of which is the fundamental reason for its being. We recall the words of Mr. Justice Jackson at the Nuremberg trial of the Nazi war criminals when he declared that silence in the face of such crimes would make us a partner of them. We cannot believe that the General Assembly will not condemn the crimes complained of in this petition.

We ask that the General Assembly of the United Nations find and declare by resolution that the Government of the United States is guilty of the crime of Genocide against the Negro people of the United States and that it further demand that the government of the United States stop and prevent the crime of genocide.

We further ask that the General Assembly by resolution condemn the Government of the United States for failing to implement and observe its solemn international obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and the Genocide Convention and that the General Assembly also demand that the United States immediately take effective steps to carry out and fulfill its international obligations under the Charter and the Genocide Convention.

In Part II of this petition we asked, and now ask again, for action under Article VIII of the Genocide Convention which provides that a contracting party can "call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take action under the Charter for the prevention and suppression of acts of Genocide."

May we express the urgent hope that for the sake of justice and

world peace, for the integrity of the United Nations Charter and the good faith of the Genocide Convention, that a contracting party now make our case its own and "call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take action. . . ."

In addition we asked in Part II of this petition, and now ask again, that any dispute as to the applicability of the Genocide Convention to the crime here alleged be submitted to the International Court of Justice in accordance with Article IX of the Genocide Convention.

From the first it has been emphasized, to use the words of the Secretariat of the United Nations in a note to the Ad Hoc Committee which drafted the Genocide Convention, that "The Convention will be concerned not only with punishment of genocide but also with its prevention."

We ask now, therefore, that the General Assembly take steps to assure that prevention. And we ask, finally, for whatever other measures shall be deemed proper by the General Assembly, under the Charter of the United Nations and the Genocide Convention, to assure the safety of the Negro people of the United States. In doing so it will contribute to the peace of the world.