

Strange Case of Paul Robeson

We refuse to be stampeded by the hysterical protests broadcast by the Civil Rights Congress and the Council on African Affairs over the refusal of authorities in Peoria, Ill., and Albany, N. Y., to permit Paul Robeson to sing in public-owned auditoriums.

Mr. Robeson virtually asked for just such a reaction by going about the country interrupting his program to lecture on political subjects which most of his auditors did not pay to hear and in which the vast majority of them did not have the slightest interest.

When the music-loving public pays to hear Roland Hayes, Marian Anderson, Dorothy Maynor, Ellabelle Davis, Carol Brice and other artists, it has a right to hear them do what they have contracted and are advertised to do, and not deliver political or sociological discourses.

An artist has no right to fool several hundred people into an auditorium under false pretense, and when an artist has offended on several occasions, civic authorities have a perfect right to refuse to permit him to use public platforms maintained by the taxes of all the people.

There are millions of music-lovers who are Democrats, Republicans, Socialists, Christians and whatnot who do not want to be bombarded with Communist-front speeches when they have paid their money to hear vocal or instrumental music, and they should not be compelled to do so.

Mr. Robeson is greatly in error if he thinks he is doing the cause of the Negro any good by these foolish exhibitions, and his political associates err if they think these barrages of phoney propaganda are going to convince anybody outside the lunatic fringe that Mr. Robeson is being "persecuted."

Negroes have enough difficulties to face in America without going around the country creating them.