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**SPECTATOR**

George Padmore's life

The gift of the West Indies to Western Culture has never been appreciated. Blacks, mulattoes, octonians and whites have sprung from these beautiful mountainous isles to the tropic seas and giving birth on their peaks to fruit and flower, animal and vegetable and extraordinary human beings. L'Overture and the Trujillo-Sanchez, Brown and Maceo and a host of poets, politicians and artists. And George Padmore, Jr., and George Padmore, Sr.

I met him first in London when I was organizing the Pan-African congresses. He was a brilliant young writer and student and I kept in touch with him. He was born in Trinidad of well-to-do and educated parents. He came to the United States for his education and was trained at Fisk where I had attended college 30 years earlier; and then he took a degree at the Howard Law School. He joined the Communist Party as a young man and finally went to Europe, living and working in London, Germany and the Soviet Union.

George Padmore devoted his entire life to the cause of African freedom. He worked as a journalist and collected a remarkable library of books and newspaper clippings which formed the basis of his research for some of the best books ever written on British colonialism, especially in Africa. His last work was Africa, Britain's Third Empire.

In the Soviet Union he lectured, was a member of the Comintern and of the Colonial Bureau of the Communist International. He differed with the Soviet leaders on matters concerning Africa and the treatment of African leaders. Just what those points of difference were I do not know. I was hoping that when I went to Ghana I would have opportunity to discuss these matters with Padmore. He was departing to England and the United States repeatedly refused him a visa.

I MET HIM LAST IN 1945. When I rejoined the NAACP in 1944, I was especially interested in continuing the Pan-African congresses. The next year the trade unions of the world met in Paris and, for the first time, African unions were strongly represented. White union leaders of Britain and America wanted to speak for these unions, knowing more or less only that low wages in colonies were the reason for their high wages in Europe and America. Therefore it would not do to have these Negroes across too fast. I was especially interested in continuing the Pan-African movement had no office or permanent organization and I, as secretary of the last congress, was its only representative. Padmore wrote me and I gladly consented to call a Congress in London in 1945. There were difficulties about halls and accommodations, but at last Manchester invited us to meet there and gave us hearty welcome. I flew over to preside and Padmore and an African, Kwanne Nkrumah, took charge of arrangements.

It proved a most inspiring meeting. There was a large number of Africans present, representing workers rather than professional men, as had been the rule in previous congresses. There was also a large number of other countries, and what was striking was the unity of the Pan-African movement. The British government, the United States and the Soviet Union, all of whom had been afraid of the Pan-African movement, had to admit its great potentiality.

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