

# Muhammad



# Speaks

Dedicated to Freedom,  
Justice and Equality for  
the so-called Negro  
The Earth Belongs to  
Allah.

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MUHAMMAD SPEAKS

**Jewish nationalist influence?**

## *Was DuBois forced to alter facts in 'Souls of Black Folk'?*

By Lonnie Kashif

WASHINGTON, D.C.— In 1903 Dr. W.E. B. DuBois wrote *The Souls of Black Folk*, a book which shortly afterwards became known as an original "Classic." Some years later, however, DuBois' works became taboo because of his radically professed tendencies and outspoken denunciation of the government.

DuBOIS SUFFERED exile in years following, and later died in Ghana—but by no means did his literary talents fall to obscurity and until very recently DuBois, the man, has been hailed as an author who exhibited rare integrity.

But a recent research paper presented by the generally progressive historian Herbert Aptheker discloses that DuBois was forced to make deletions and alterations in the 1953 edition of *The Souls of Black Folk*. Aptheker approves of the changes. But Blacks might wonder, "Did DuBois sell his soul?"

Aptheker, a noted historian and professed admirer of the late author, in presenting his paper before the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History last October, disclosed that line-by-line comparison of the 1903 and 1953 editions revealed "seven substantive changes," of similar substance. "They aim at eliminating possible anti-Semitic (sic) connotations, though as to this, some ambiguity attaches to two of the alterations."

Aptheker's presentation, which appears in the January issue of the *Negro History Bulletin*, purports to show that DuBois was never "anti-Semitic," but instead strongly identified with Jewish interest to the extent that he

revised his book to emphasize these sympathies.

He quotes DuBois as writing, "In the present Jubilee (1953) Edition... I have made less than a half-dozen alterations in word or phrase, and then not to change my thought as previously set down but to avoid any possible misunderstanding today of what I meant to say yesterday." (It is worth noting, too, that Aptheker uses the scientifically incorrect term "anti-Semitism" which is a reactionary nationalist term concealing the fact that Arabs and Middle Eastern Jews are Semites while European Jews are less so.)

Aptheker however goes beyond DuBois' comments on the changes in the text, to imply (again perhaps unintentionally) that DuBois had in fact been subjected to strong pressure to change passages which offended Jewish nationalist, perhaps Zionist, interests.

"Dr. Du Bois," Aptheker said, promised Rabbi Stephen, who at the time had made strenuous objections to certain passages in the original version, that he would "reexamine this question and indeed make changes in future editions, "if they seemed in error."

"Somewhat later," Aptheker continued, Morris U. Schappes, a Jewish historian, questioned DuBois about revising his book. Another of "the Doctor's" associates, Jacob Schiff, "pointed out to him that certain passages in 'Souls' were offensive," Aptheker added.

IN ANOTHER comment, which Aptheker attributes to

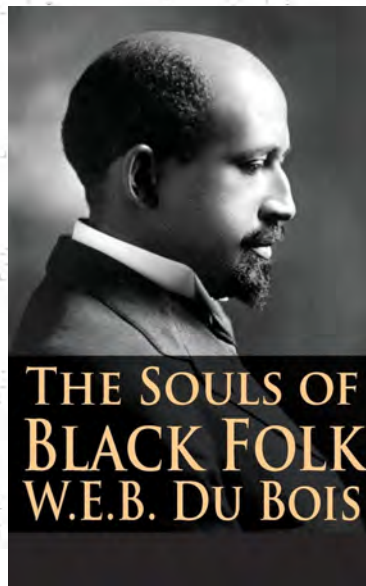
DuBois, (in one of the late author's "unpublished notes") he is quoted as saying, "how easy it is especially in race relations, inadvertently to give a totally wrong impression." The statement suggests that DuBois was indeed expressing growing anxiety over apparent Jewish nationalist and Zionist imputations and criticism of what they considered anti-"Semitism" in his work.

Aptheker stated further that DuBois did exhibit some early resentment to the criticism, but the line-by-line comparison of the two versions clearly shows that DuBois altered completely innocent passages referring to Jews, thereby sacrificing historical accuracy, and distorting the historical context in which the

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RECENT RESEARCH by historian Herbert Aptheker raises possibility that he places his 'Jewishness' above his objectivity as a renowned scientist. Aptheker reported with approval incidents in which the late W.E.B. DuBois (above) apparently was forced to remove concrete, unprejudiced references to Jews from his great classic, 'The Souls of Black Folk,' simply because he referred quite matter-of-factly to examples of Jews exploiting Blacks in the South. Blacks wonder if there is a double standard for Jews in which their national identity is proudly mentioned when they do something they approve of but removed when they do not want to be associated with a particular activity.



THE SOULS OF  
BLACK FOLK  
W.E.B. DU BOIS

Continued:

## Did Zionists impale DuBois' 'Souls'?

book was written—as well as handicapping future biographers of his history in regard to his thinking and personality at the time.

The initial naively innocent passage cited by Aptheker in his comparison was thus: The 1903 version: "The Jew is the heir of the slave - baron in Dougherty (County, Georgia) and we ride westward by wide stretching corn - fields and stubby orchards of peach and pear, we see all sides within the circle of dark forest a land of Canaan. Here and there are tales of projects for money-getting born in the swift days of Reconstruction — 'improvement' companies, wine companies mills and factories; nearly all failed, and the Jew fell heir." The 1953 version: Identical except: "Immigrants are heirs...; most failed, and foreigners fell heir."

Other passages, all obviously historical truths, sacrificed in the revised editions, included the following: 1903 Version: "This plantation, owned by a Russian Jew, was part of the famous Bolton estate." — 1953 Version: "This Plantation, owned by a foreigner..."

1903 Version: "Most of this land was poor, and beneath the notice of the slave - baron, before the war. Since then his nephews and the poor whites and the Jews have seized it." — 1953 Version: Identical except, "since then his poor relations and foreign immigrants have seized it." 1903 Version: "I have seen, in

the Black Belt of Georgia, an ignorant, honest Negro buy and pay for a farm in installments three separate times and then in the face of law and decency the enterprising Russian Jew sold it to him, pocketed the money and deed and left the Black man landless, to labor on his own farm at thirty cents a day." — 1953 Version: Identical except "the enterprising Russian Jew" is replaced with the "enterprising American."

IN APTHEKER'S concluding comparison DuBois characterized the Jews of that period.

In the 1903 Version, he wrote: "Political defense (for the Southern Black) is becoming less and less available and economic defense is still only partially effective. But there is a patent defense at hand, — the defense of deception and flattery, of cajoling and lying. It is the same defense which the Jews of the Middle Age used and which left its stamp on their character for centuries." — the 1953 Version was altered to read: "The peasants of the Middle Age." In all cases the Jews apparently object to being identified — they want to present themselves as a special supra - national group.

Aptheker's discovery, whether presented for purely academic reasons or whether inspired by more subtle, or ulterior motives, not only lays bare the increasing dangers of censorship and distortion of

history, but reveals what may ultimately lead to book burning by diabolical elements within US society who gain monopoly control over the Radio - TV media and publishing houses.

For DuBois, Aptheker's

revelation can hardly prove flattering, but may otherwise serve a purpose (again obviously not intended by Aptheker) in exposing the deceit and hypocrisy being used in manipulation of the great and near great among

the Black masses. The facts indicate quite clearly that even an anti - Zionist Jew like Aptheker can look the other way when a great Black writer and thinker is forced to change his words or else find no publisher for them.

## Letters From Our Readers Disagrees with Aptheker article

Mr. Lonnie Kashif — writing in the April 23, 1971, issue of *Muhammad Speaks*, asks: "Was DuBois forced to alter facts in 'Souls of Black Folk'?" He spoke of "manipulation," and that DuBois "altered completely passages referring to Jews."

FOR EXAMPLE, he quotes from the 1903 version: "...the poor whites and the Jews seized it." (the land) and, again "the enterprising Russian Jew." How often have we heard people speak of the "crafty Jew," or "the lazy Negro" or equate Jews or Black people with undesirable qualities? All the implications of prejudice are there, even if unintentional. It is obvious that DuBois did not intend prejudice and this is demonstrated by the fact that he was willing to change his words when the error was pointed out. As DuBois himself stated: "How easy it is especially in race relations inadvertently to give a totally wrong impression."

For Kashif to speak of the "manipulation" of DuBois is to

slander him, as if to say that he had no mind of his own. Kashif obviously didn't know DuBois. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah described him as a "phenomenon," while Aptheker said: "He was among the most consequential figures of the century... He was the American of the Twentieth Century."

Kashif said, "The facts indicate quite clearly that even an anti - Zionist Jew like Aptheker can look the other way when a great Black writer and thinker is forced to change his words or else find no publisher for them." As for finding a publisher, Mr. Kashif should read the forward to Aptheker's *Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion*. Aptheker states that in the early 1900s DuBois had already achieved a high reputation as a scholar and was approached by historian Ellis P. Oberholzer, of the publishing firm of George Jacobs and Co. DuBois was asked to do a biography of Frederick Douglass. DuBois agreed and a contract was signed. However, word of the

agreement reached Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee. Washington did not approve and the contract was broken by the publishing firm.

It might prove interesting to know that the real power and the real manipulators behind

B.T. Washington were men like William H. Baldwin (President of the Long Island Railroad), J.C. Phelps-Stokes, George Foster Peabody, Jacob Schiff, Robert C. Ogden, Andrew Carnegie, and others — here we have a portion of the

industrial power that is American imperialism, and with it the racism—the ideological counterpart of this economic system.

Sincerely,  
Clarence Kallin  
Madison, Wis.