

Primary Source

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Plan to Boycott Yankees, By Wendell Smith

New York City, New York-James Pemberton and Col. Hulbert S. Julian, president and executive secretary respectively of the "Societies for Equality in Sports" called upon Negro veterans of World War II and Negro businessmen throughout the nation this week to boycott the opening major league games.

The organization, with membership, according to the officers, of 600, is developing plans to stage a gigantic demonstration here Tuesday at Yankee Stadium, where the Yanks open against the Boston Red Sox. According to Mr. Pemberton... the organization is solely interested in ending the unfair employment practice policy perpetuated by the major leagues.

Col. Julian said... "We are going to picket Yankee Stadium and fight for this to the end so that when our soldiers return they will see that their sacrifices were not in vain".

The organization sent the following Telegram Tuesday morning to Ford Frick and William Harrige, presidents of the National and American Leagues, and to the owners of sixteen major league clubs"

Gentlemen: You are herewith advised that on the opening day of your game, we the Negro veterans of World War II and businessmen of New York City, will boycott your games. Your failure to employ competent Negro players motivates this action. Baseball is the great American sport. Black Americans contribute hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to baseball yet they are denied the opportunity that is rightfully theirs to participate in the game. Our sacrifices in this and other wars in the defense of country entitles us to an equal opportunity in all phases of American democratic endeavor. Your discriminatory practices are alien and wholly at variance with the democracy for which they are fighting.

Questions

*Answer on a separate sheet of paper, in complete sentences.

1. According to this article, who is planning to boycott the Yankees, and why?
2. What demands are the organizers making? Why do they feel that their actions are justified?

What do you think is the most effective passage in the article? (Highlight or underline it). Explain why you choose this line/passage.