

## **CALL MR. ROBESON: A life, with songs.**

**Written and Performed by Tayo Aluko**

**With Dennis Nelson, Piano**

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**Greetings and Welcome.** It appears that we are now witnessing the beginning of a new phase in Libyan history. In the huge task of rebuilding their society and (re)constructing a democratic system, “help” will no doubt be given (like it or not) by the big players who backed the so-called rebels: America, where a Congress full of people described by a top British politician as “Right-Wing Nutters” can almost paralyse the government rather than see tax dollars spent on things like welfare; Great Britain, where the coalition government looks increasingly like a bad marriage that all friends and relatives advised against from the moment the two parties started sleeping with each other; and France, where the possibility of a future President being a repeatedly accused but unproven rapist doesn’t appear to be seen as a huge problem or embarrassment. The history of Western governments meddling in other countries’ affairs while failing to provide adequately for their own people is of course very long, and Paul Robeson was one of those who drew the world’s attention to this. Such behaviour was considered Un-American, and brought him untold trouble. Ironically, Martin Luther King Jnr late in life came round to saying similar things, so it is perhaps not unreasonable to dream that one day, a national monument might be unveiled somewhere to Robeson! In the meantime, the rest of us mere mortals can at least do what we can to continue to hold our politicians to account, and just as urgently, ensure that we stop our governments and leaderships being not only embarrassments to us, but also dangers to society and the planet. We may not all be remembered, but history and future generations will thank us, as we must thank Paul Robeson for his bravery and shining example of true humanity. I hope you enjoy the show.