

Green Tries to Split The Latin-American Labor Movement

By William Z. Foster

In their proposed conference of the Pan-American Federation of Labor to be held in Havana probably early in 1940, the immediate aim of the A. F. of L. leaders is to extend their war against the CIO throughout the two American continents by splitting the Latin American Confederation of Workers, which was formed in Mexico City last year in a congress that was attended by John L. Lewis in a fraternal capacity. The broad political significance of the A. F. of L.'s split move is an attempt to provide the reactionary enemies of President Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy with a labor basis throughout Latin America and to trip the quickly growing people's front movement (and, of course, the expanding Communist Parties) in these countries.

The A. F. of L. has not a shred of progressive justification for resurrecting the Pan-American Federation of Labor, which has not held a conference since 1927, and injecting it into the Latin American labor situation. The Latin American workers, who are rapidly building powerful trade union movements in many countries, have, in their new Confederation, laid the basis for genuine labor unity. All the mass unions of Latin America—including those of Mexico, Chile, Cuba, Argentina, Colombia and Uruguay, totaling at least 2,500,000 members, are either directly affiliated to the Confederation or are immediately within the orbit of its influence. The foundation of the Latin American Confederation of Workers was one of the most important steps taken towards real unity by world labor for many years past.

The Pan-American Federation of Labor on the other hand, has no mass following whatever in Latin America, nor has it any progressive function to perform there. The workers hate it because of the noisome record it made under Gompers as an apologist and cover-up in Latin America for the imperialist exploitation and tyrannies of the Coolidge and Hoover regimes. V. L. Toledano, General Secretary of the Latin American Confederation of Workers, correctly expresses the opinion of the masses in the Latin American countries when he denounces the digging up of the corpse of the P. F. of L. as work "in the service of the imperialists." All the P. F. of L. can hope for in Latin America in the way of support is the collaboration of a few corrupt and discredited labor fakers such as Morones of Mexico, plus the assistance of reactionary politicians in the countries dominated by dictators and generally the cooperation of fascists and other enemies of the Good Neighbor policy and the people's democratic movements. Thus, the P. F. of L., Green can give it a semblance of life, will be a disruptive, reactionary force in Latin America, one that brings aid to nobody but the enemies of the people.

To achieve unity of all the labor movements of the three Americas is absolutely necessary to the progress of the developing anti-fascist, anti-war democratic front on a hemisphere scale. But the launching of the Pan-American Federation of Labor, which is a stench in the nostrils of Latin American workers, can only hinder such trade union unity. The way to inter-continental labor unity may be indicated as follows: first, the Latin American workers should rally solidly around their present Latin American Confederation of Workers; second, collaboration between them and the workers in the countries of the north should be achieved by the Confederation exchanging fraternal delegates with the A. F. of L., CIO and Canadian Trades Congress at their respective conventions; third, only when the A. F. of L. and CIO have healed their split, or at least agreed upon a joint program of democratic collaboration with the Latin American workers, will the basis be at hand for the establishment of a great federation of labor to include all the labor movements of North, Central and South America.

There is no place for the Pan-American Federation of Labor in the progressive development of all-American labor solidarity. The day is past when a handful of A. F. of L. bureaucrats can dominate and demoralize the Latin American labor movement. The holding

of the proposed P. F. of L. conference should be vigorously opposed. The militant stand of Toledano against the conference must be fully supported, not only by the organized workers of Latin America, but especially by those of the United States. And if in spite of these protests the splitters Green, Woll, Hutcheson & Co., dare to go ahead with their P. F. of L. conference it should be actively boycotted by the unions of Latin America, Canada and the United States. Under no circumstance should the A. F. of L. reactionaries be allowed to extend their split across the Rio Grande.

There is talk that Green and his cronies may attempt to secure the assistance of reactionary leaders of the Amsterdam International—to which body many Latin American unions are affiliated—in an effort to cajole or drag some of these unions into the Pan-American Federation of Labor. Workers everywhere in the Americas, therefore, should be on guard against any such possible maneuver by the Amsterdam International. The solidarity of the Latin American workers, plus the support of progressive labor in the United States, can and must defeat any attempt to re-establish the Pan-American Federation of Labor, regardless of from what quarter it comes.

The A. F. of L. effort to revive the Pan-American Federation of Labor emphasizes afresh the great danger involved in the A. F. of L.-CIO split, which was caused originally and is now being fostered by Green and Co. The split has become predominantly political in character, and its pernicious effects are international in scope. If the split is not soon healed it may well be the cause of disorganizing the workers and other toilers' votes sufficiently to throw the 1940 elections in this country to the Republicans. Such a defeat would destroy the progressive role of the United States government everywhere. It would be a disaster to the cause of democracy and progress in the United States and a serious setback to the struggle against fascism and war throughout Latin America and the world.

In view of these grave political dangers inherent in the split it is high time, therefore, that the workers and progressives of the United States understand and deal with the A. F. of L.-CIO split in its true light. It is by no means merely a trade union question, but a political issue of great national and international importance. New Deal elements of the A. F. of L., together with the CIO, which is New Deal as a whole, rising above all factional attitudes and working fraternally together, should demand that an end be put to the split, in the name of the political future of the country as well as of the immediate interests of trade unionism. At least 95 per cent of organized labor will support such a unity demand. Labor Tories who are consciously playing the game of the Republicans must not be allowed to turn the United States over to the reactionaries by continuing this suicidal split. There must be an end made once and for all to the present needless and dangerous division in the workers' ranks, a division which injures the progressive cause on every front, and of which the A. F. of L. leaders' attempt to disrupt the labor movement of Latin America is only one more shameful manifestation.

Hopes of Lifting Squalus Sub By July 1 Fade

PORTSMOUTH, N. H., June 14 (UP).—Hopes of bringing the sunken submarine, Squalus and its 26 dead to the surface by July 1 faded today.

Divers attempting to tunnel beneath the submarine with a compressed air hose have met an obstruction and are having difficulty in piercing it, navy officials said.



WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

FDR Gets Data From Envoy on Tokio Incident

Grew Tells of Blockade; U. S. Studies Crisis Developments

WASHINGTON, June 14 (UP).—Joseph C. Grew, United States Ambassador to Tokio, gave President Roosevelt a review of the Far Eastern crisis today while State Department officials watched closely the situation caused by the Japanese blockade of the British and French concessions at Tientsin.

Grew was to have conferred with the Chief Executive yesterday. Instead, he was in almost constant touch with Secretary of State Cordell Hull whose Far Eastern representatives kept him abreast of developments at Tientsin.

Hull said at a press conference today that U.S. diplomatic representatives would do anything within reason to aid a settlement.

Hull said that there is nothing to indicate American interests or nationals in the Tientsin area are in immediate danger. He added that his representatives were prepared to establish reasonable protection should United States rights be affected.

Four ships of the Asiatic squadron are at Chinwangtao, 200 miles from Tientsin. They are the converted yacht Isabella, the light cruiser Marblehead, the heavy cruiser Augusta, flagship of Rear Admiral Harry E. Yarnell, squadron commander, and the Pecos, a small gunboat.

Tokio Tightens Its Blockade At Tientsin

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a Chinese inspector of the Japanese-dominated Tientsin Customs.

The Japanese were understood to have rejected a British proposal for a three-man conciliation tribunal to decide whether four Chinese accused of assassinating the customs official should be turned over to the Japanese.

A Japanese foreign office spokesman in Tokio admitted that the assassination dispute had become relatively unimportant and that the issue at stake was whether the British intended to "hamper" Japan's China policies.

CHUNKING, China, Thursday, June 15 (UP).—Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Chung-hui said today that Japan's blockade of the British and French concessions in Tientsin is designed to "find out how far Japan can go in carrying out a policy of seizing all the foreign settlements in China."

He called on the foreign powers to "call Japan's bluff" by a collective boycott of Japanese goods "instead of allowing their rights to be trampled upon by a nation nearing exhaustion."

"If Japan does not even respect the rights and interests of her partners in the anti-Commintern pact (Germany and Italy) and also is able to attain her objectives through gangster methods, then the future position of the powers in the territory under Japanese jurisdiction is dark indeed," he