

“Blah!”

The coming Congress will discuss at length all questions—except those of importance to the welfare of the workers!



BLOODY SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 1905.

The priest Gapon leads the masses to their slaughter on the square before the Winter Palace.

somewhat the working day, raise their wages a bit, and remove some of the objectionable working conditions. These organizations, in fact, were formed under the aegis of the government, and are known in Russian labor history as **Police Unions**.

These "labor unions" were to be the Russian counterpart of the classless unions existing in other West-European countries—namely the Hirsh-Dunker unions of Germany; the Catholic unions of Austria and Belgium, and similar de-revolutionized labor organizations. Instead of yellow unions, as they are known in other countries, the czarist government was going to have them altogether **black**. Mussolini took a leaf out of Russian history when he formed his fascist labor unions. This, however, is not the only resemblance that his regime bears to the czarist order of old Russia.

Zubatov, the chief of the secret police in Moscow, became the organizer of such unions, in which he succeeded in enrolling large numbers of workers. Siding with the work-

ers on a few occasions in their conflict with the employers, Zubatov gained an influence and for a time proved the efficiency of unions organized under government patronage. During the celebration at the monument of Alexander II. in 1902, Zubatov was able to corral about 50,000 workers.

Under Zubatov's tutelage, similar "labor unions" were organized among the workers of Odessa and Minsk, where renegade Socialists became the willing aides of the Moscow chief spy. Zubatov was particularly anxious to win the Jewish workers who started earlier in forming illegal labor unions. His endeavors among them met with little success from the very start.

Large numbers of workers in Petersburg were later inveigled into joining these police unions. As in Moscow, the Socialists warned the Petersburg workers against joining these organizations, pointing out their true nature and purpose, but some of the immediate results, mostly irrelevant, which they had secured through them, and particularly the right to assemble at their factory clubs to discuss matters



Street Fighting in Moscow, December, 1905. The mounted soldiers are charging the workers' barricades.

act of the revolutionary drama of 1905 took place. Decried by the fate of the Revolution, the workers who were under Gapon's tutelage and government protection, were chosen to be the performers in that first act.

It began with a strike at the Putilov Mills. The strike was conducted by the Society of Factory Workers—the Petersburg police union, with economic demands as the original cause. The leaders of the Society and of the strike who were employed at Putilov's were discharged by the administrators. Sympathetic strikes followed, first in different parts of the Putilov workers and later spreading to the factories until they embraced about 140,000 workers.

It was then that the grandiose plan to present the czar with a petition was put forth. Gapon, sensing a dramatic opportunity for himself, urged this plan upon the masses of striking workers who were getting beyond control. The Socialists tried hard to dissuade the workers from adopting the plan. They warned the workers not to go into the trap which the government was spreading for them. But it was of no avail. Gapon and his lieutenants had the control over the masses. The petition was drawn, in which, in humble and pious language, the Little Father was importuned to take pity on his suffering children and improve their miserable lot. Not being able to stop the proceedings, the Socialists tried to introduce some political demands into the movement upon which they looked with apprehension.

Gapon organized the parade to the Winter Palace in grand style. He got thousands of workers—men, women

and children—to join the procession with church ikons and portraits of the czar carried at the head, attesting to the religious and political reliability of the masses. The parade was set for Sunday, Jan. 22. Gapon claimed that he had notified the Minister Mirsky about the intended presentation of a petition to the czar at the Winter Palace. When the procession reached the square in front of the palace, it was met, not by the Little Father, but by his picked soldiers, who sent a volley of shots into the crowd, with the result that thousands lay killed and wounded on the snow-covered stones, before the masses could realize what had really happened.

The government knew of the proposed manifestation and petition. It knew the contents of the document, which was devoid of any revolutionary sentiments. The petition was full of humility and resignation. It ended as follows:

"These, Lord, are our main needs which we want to call to your attention. Decree and swear to carry them out—and you will make Russia glorious and powerful; you will imprint your name on our hearts and the hearts of our progeny forever. If you will not accept our prayers, we shall die here on this square in front of your palace. We have no place to go to, and there is no purpose in it. We have only two ways, either to liberty and happiness, or to the grave. Point out, Lord, either one and we shall go to it without protest, even if it shall be the way to death. Let our lives be the sacrifice for suffering Russia. We are prepared to make this sacrifice. We shall gladly make it." (Quoted in L. Trotzky's "1905").

The butchery was a clear provocation on the part of the government. The workers were fooled into the undertaking so that the government might administer a "rebuke" which would be remembered by all those who might want to embark on a similar course of action. The murder on Palace Square was the apotheosis of the "Spring" regime. The autocracy bared the claws which it had kept hidden, and served notice on the people that it would brook no opposition, nor even loyal prayers for partial reform. Governor Trepov's orders to the Petersburg garrison "not to be niggardly with bullets" was the defiant answer of the czar to the approaching revolution.

The Revolution Is Born.

Almost two generations of revolutionists have come and gone before January 22, 1905. Many of them have swung from the gallows and still more were buried alive behind prison walls, or were laboring in Siberian mines for having dared to dream about a rising of the people against autocracy. Bloody Sunday opened the flood-gates of the revolution. The fiendish betrayal of the masses on the Palace Square destroyed in the Petersburg workers every vestige of trust in the "Little Father" and his government. They entered the square humble and servile subjects of the czar. Those who remained alive left the Square with their minds cleared of the age-long illusions and with a consuming vengeance in their hearts for the murder of their fellows.

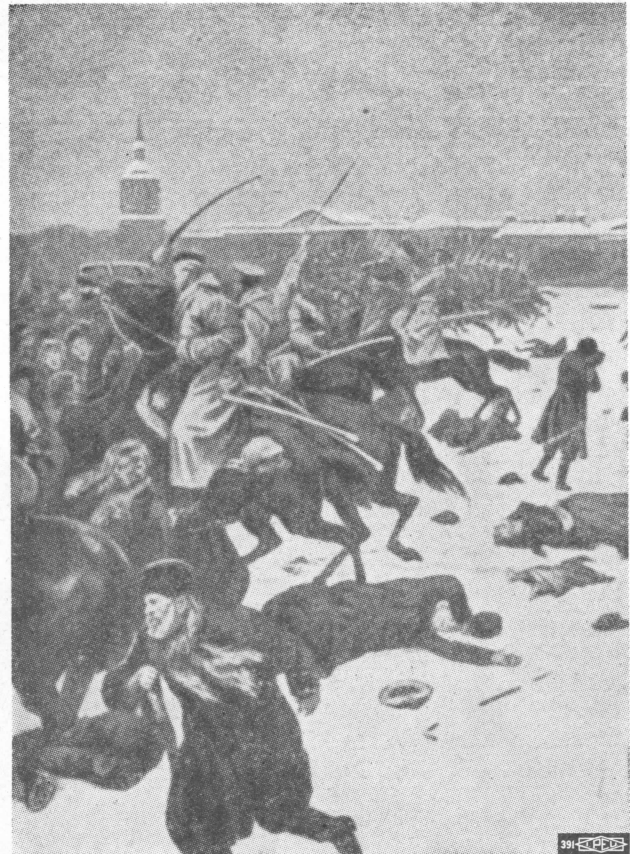
Not only in Petersburg, but in all industrial centers, a revolutionary class began to assert itself, realizing the conditions under which it was living and conscious of its power to alter those conditions. The blood of the murdered Petersburg workers cried out for revenge and action, and the workers everywhere rose in a mighty protest against the crime perpetrated upon their class. During the following

month one hundred and twenty-two cities were in the throes of strikes and political demonstrations of workers.

It was while these events were taking place that the crafty Witte was writing Nicholas to end the war with Japan because of lack of funds, and because "we need the army in Russia to fight our own people." The Moscow workers were none too gloomy when they heard on February 4 that Grand Duke Sergius, the czar's uncle, was blown to bits in front of the Kremlin. Outbreaks were occurring everywhere. The peasants were also rising against the landowners and the government which was squeezing the very lifeblood out of them. In the army, particularly in the fleet, unmistakable signs of revolts were being observed. During the summer, when it looked as though the government had succeeded in arresting the disturbances, the sailors on the battleship "Potemkin" of the Black Sea fleet, rose in revolt and attempted to get the rest of the fleet to follow their example. This rebellion frightened the government, and it made public a proposal of one of its ministers to establish a parliament with consultative powers to which only representatives of the capitalists and landowners could be elected. This proposal for a parliament was met with derision everywhere and nothing came of it. The middle classes, particularly the professionals—teachers, lawyers, office workers, engineers, etc., were also being drawn into the welter of the revolution. Organizations of these elements were being formed and national conventions were held in which sympathies with the aims of the revolution were expressed. The revolution was beginning to penetrate all sections of the population. While it was broadening out it was also striking its roots deeper into the social fabric.

Revolutionary Theory and Revolutionary Action.

The revolution was marching in seven league boots. The Social-Democratic party was the leading political factor in the revolution. The Socialist-Revolutionists had little influence among the workers. Among the Social-Democrats the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, though in the same Party, were developing different ideas regarding the various problems affecting the revolution. The Mensheviks were in control of the Central Committee of the Party. Immediately after January 22, the Bolsheviks began to demand the convocation of a Party congress to analyze what had happened and chart of the course for future actions. The Mensheviks refused and the Bolsheviks issued a call for a congress which was held in London. No Menshevik delegates came to the Congress, this faction having called a conference of its own people in Geneva. Since the majority of the Party organizations were represented at the London Congress it was considered as a regular Party Congress. The Mensheviks never accepted that. This was really the first Bolshevik Congress at which a homogeneous group gathered to evaluate the changes in the conditions of the country and the ideology of the workers. It was the most significant congress in the history of the Party. It laid the foundation for the most important policies, which later marked the Bolsheviks as a distinct group in the Socialist movement. Most of the best-known Bolshevik leaders participated at this Congress—Lenin, Kamenev, Rykov, Lunarcharsky, Krassin, Litvinov, Vorovsky and others were there to formulate the policies which not only were carried out during the 1905 revolution,



The revolting workers are massacred by soldiers of the Czar.

but were at the basis of the revolutionary activity of the Bolsheviks up to and during 1917.

While the Mensheviks were already getting scared that the revolution was going a bit too fast, the Bolsheviks were boldly and optimistically looking forward to the natural unfolding of the revolution in which the Russian workers were destined to cover themselves with glory. It was at this Congress that the Lenin formulation of the dictatorship of the workers and peasants was adopted.

Only a chance discussion of democracy took place at the previous Congress. This discussion became historic, because Plekhanov sided with Lenin in the analysis of the attitude of the proletariat toward democracy. A Bolshevik delegate, Pasadovsky, raised the following question while some editorial changes of the program were being adopted: "Shall our future policy be subordinated to this or that fundamental democratic principle, or shall all democratic principles be subordinated entirely to the advantage of our Party," and continued: "I am for the latter position. There is no democratic principle which shouldn't be subordinated to the welfare of the Party." Plekhanov replied by expressing solidarity with Pasadovsky's position. It is worth while quoting his opinion somewhat at length on this very impor-



The Czar sends his Cossacks into the village.

tant point. It would be well for our American Socialists who are enamoured of democracy to read carefully the following lines:

"Every given democratic principle," said Plekhanov, "must be considered not as an isolated proposition, but in relation to that principle which can be called the fundamental principle of democracy—*salus populi suprema lex*—(the welfare of the people is the supreme law). Translated into the language of a revolutionist it means that the success of the revolution is the supreme law. If it were necessary for the sake of the revolution temporarily to limit the operations of this or that democratic principle, it would be

criminal to question such limitations. My personal view is that even the principle of universal suffrage can be looked upon from the democratic principle just enunciated by me. It can be hypothetically conceived that we, social-democrats, may declare against universal suffrage. The bourgeoisie of the Italian republics sometimes denied political rights to members of the nobility. The revolutionary proletariat could limit the rights of the upper classes in the same way as the upper classes limited its rights. The worthiness of such a measure could be considered entirely from the rule—*salus revolutiae suprema lex*."

The draft program carried a provision for the election

of parliament every two years. In discussing this provision in connection with the whole question of democracy, Plekhanov said: "The same point of view should prevail regarding the question of the duration of parliament. If the people, imbued with revolutionary enthusiasm, elected a very good parliament, it would be our duty to make it a **long parliament**. If, on the other hand, the elections proved unfavorable we should try to disperse it, not within two years, but within two weeks." (Quoted from Report of Second Congress of the Russian Communist Party.)

These golden words, coming from the father of Russian Marxism, were enthusiastically acclaimed by Lenin and his followers, who left this Congress nick-named "Bolsheviks." When Zinoviev writes about this period of Russian Party history, he cannot refrain from speaking about the "Bolshevik Plekhanov."

The Third Congress met during the Revolution. It not only formulated the theory of workers' and peasants' dictatorship, but raised the slogan for an armed uprising as the only means of carrying the revolution to a favorable conclusion. The relation to the existing government on the eve of its overthrow, the attitude towards the provisional government which would come in its place, and toward the bourgeoisie, were among the important policies adopted at this Congress which was sitting as a revolutionary war council.

The General Strike.

The General Strike in October was the natural outcome of the strike movement which was gaining momentum during the year. The political character of these strikes became their dominant feature and the workers began to look upon the isolated stoppages as preludes to greater demonstrations.

A general strike was originally contemplated for January, 1906, when the so-called Bulygin Duma, referred to above, was to convene. The railway workers of the Moscow district began to strike October 20, with a view to testing their strength. Other districts followed. In the meantime, demands for the 8 hour day, amnesty for political prisoners, and civil liberties were being advanced. The strikes began to spread and to affect not only the railway workers all over the country, but other industries as well. Within one week the strike became general. Economic life was paralyzed as a result in all industrial centers. After trying to liquidate the strike by the force of arms in several cities, the government admitted its defeat and "granted," on October 30, a constitution with the promise to convene a parliament. Although the civil liberties granted in the Manifesto remained on paper, and the Duma was a restricted legislative assembly, the capitulation of the government proved the power of the general strike employed for political purposes.

The liberal bourgeoisie declared itself completely satisfied with the October Manifesto. They wanted a share in the government and the constitution gave them that. They were anxious to see the strike liquidated. In this they were supported by the Mensheviks and some labor unions who were afraid that the strike might go "too far," and endanger its achievements. The Bolsheviks insisted on the continuation of the struggle and counselled further preparations as the enemy was not entirely beaten. Within three days of the calling off of the strike, the government, in league with



LIEUTENANT PETER SCHMIDT.
Leader of the mutiny of the Russian sailors in Odessa in 1905.
Executed on March 6, 1906.

the so-called Black Hundreds organized a come-back. The counter-revolution stalked through the land in the form of Jewish pogroms organized simultaneously in over 100 cities. Playing upon the religious prejudices of the ignorant and superstitious people, hired bands of criminal elements proceeded under police protection to pillage and massacre Jews, aiming in this manner to terrorize the population. Under the cover of these instigated disturbances the government was preparing to liquidate the revolution.

The Soviet is Formed.

While the general strike marked an epoch not only of the Russian Revolution but of the international labor movement as well, it fell on a by-product of this strike to become the single outstanding contribution of the revolution. When the general strike was spreading in Petersburg it became evident that a body would have to be formed



it, and were grateful to the government for its determined action in Moscow. And Plekhanov, too, joined the chorus by declaring that "this (the defeat) was not difficult to foresee and therefore there should not have been a resort to arms." Lenin, on the contrary considered the Moscow uprising as a highly important achievement of the revolution. He recalled Marx' letters to Kugelmann written during the French Commune in which the latter glorified the "storming of the heavens" by the Paris workers.

The Lessons of 1905.

If the Russian workers were born as a revolutionary class in Petersburg, it was in Moscow that they came of age. The Russian Revolution began after Bloody Sunday: it reached its highest form during the December uprising in Moscow. During 1905 the Russian working-class had run the whole gamut of revolutionary action. The Mensheviks considered the defeat of the 1905 Revolution as irreparable. They counselled new methods, peaceful and democratic, to avoid sacrifices in the future. They proposed

the liquidation of the underground movement and favored coalition with the bourgeoisie which was going to function within the framework of the October constitution. The Bolsheviks on the other hand were not down-hearted. They counted the losses during the counter-revolution. They saw numerous mistakes which were made, but they realised that during the revolution, during the "storming of the heavens," the Russian workers became conscious as a revolutionary class which was destined to assert its revolutionary will in Russia. While the Mensheviks were engaged in funeral rites over the revolution, the Bolsheviks maintained that Czarism won only a Pyrrhic victory; that the revolution only retreated to reorganize its broken lines and to prepare itself for new action when the opportune moment arrived. Instead of calling off the struggle, as the Mensheviks proposed, the Bolsheviks threw into the teeth of the government the defiant declaration that the revolution had only begun, and that it would continue until every vestige of autocracy and capitalism was destroyed. The Bolsheviks put themselves at the head of all those elements of the

American imperialism developed later than the imperialism of Great Britain, but its paralyzing effect on the labor movement is just as apparent as was that of British imperialism in 1915, when Lenin wrote the sentences quoted at the beginning of this article.

Imperialism creates the necessity for world trade union unity. It sets in motion also the forces which oppose it. Nowhere in the capitalist world are these forces more powerful than in the United States. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the most merciless enemy of world trade union unity is the bureaucracy of the American Federation of Labor.

At the Atlantic City convention there occurred an event of historic importance to the American working class. Just as the publication of the British Trade Union Report on Russia marked the sweep of the tremendous influence of the Russian revolution into the British labor movement, so did the visit of Purcell, as fraternal delegate from the British Trade Union Congress to the A. F. of L. convention, mark the beginning of a new period in American labor history. Chairman of the International Federation of Trade Unions with its 20,000,000 members, vice-chairman of the General Council of the British Trades Union Congress, chairman of the British trade union delegation to Soviet Russia, member of the House of Commons, Purcell is the most influential figure that ever appeared as a fraternal delegate of the A. F. of L.

Purcell Pleads World Union Unity, Russian Recognition.

Purcell appeared as an advocate of world trade union unity, an enemy of imperialism and he urged recognition of Soviet Russia.

It is impossible to quote extensively from his speech in an article of this length, and some outstanding sentences will have to serve to show that he challenged the entire attitude of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy:

"The call I want to make . . . is a call for the unity of the world's workers—for the world brotherhood of all those who toil. I make no apology for making that call. I consider it my highest duty and finest privilege at this great convention of American workers . . . In London, Berlin, Moscow and Vienna . . . I have watched the serried ranks of the hosts of labor go marching past . . . a vast, tremendous, vital force, a gigantic Confraternity of Labor . . . the call I want to make is to join with us . . . we need the American Federation of Labor in our International. . . . I TELL YOU THAT THE POLICY OF

ISOLATION IS A MISTAKEN ONE . . . THE MONROE DOCTRINE NO LONGER HOLDS GOOD FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT—AS ITS IMPERIAL POLICY IN THE PHILIPPINES, IN CHINA AND ELSEWHERE DEMONSTRATES—AND NO LONGER HOLDS GOOD FOR YOUR CAPITALISTS. IT CAN NO LONGER HOLD GOOD FOR YOU!"

Purcell will probably never know the depth of the black hatred he aroused by these words in the hearts of the labor agents of American imperialism. To them, accustomed to disguise their servility to Wall Street and its robber policy by voicing sympathy for the colonial workers while selling the unions of these colonials to Wall Street, as in Mexico, Purcell immediately became "an agent of Moscow," the most approbrious term they can hurl at an opponent.

But worse was to come. Purcell continued:

"I have been to Russia. There I have seen the workers assuming vast responsibilities and duties . . . I am proud of the genius for organization and the essential grip of things which my class in Russia has displayed . . . The Russian people are a great people . . . strong, patient, hard-working, clever . . . I SAY THAT YOU WORKERS OF AMERICA HAVE TO LEARN FROM RUSSIA . . . I HOPE THAT FROM NOW ON THE ORGANIZED WORKERS OF AMERICA WILL ESTABLISH THE CLOSEST FRATERNAL RELATIONS WITH THE WORKERS OF RUSSIA . . ."

Green Insults Delegate of British Labor.

Purcell's eloquent plea for world trade union unity and

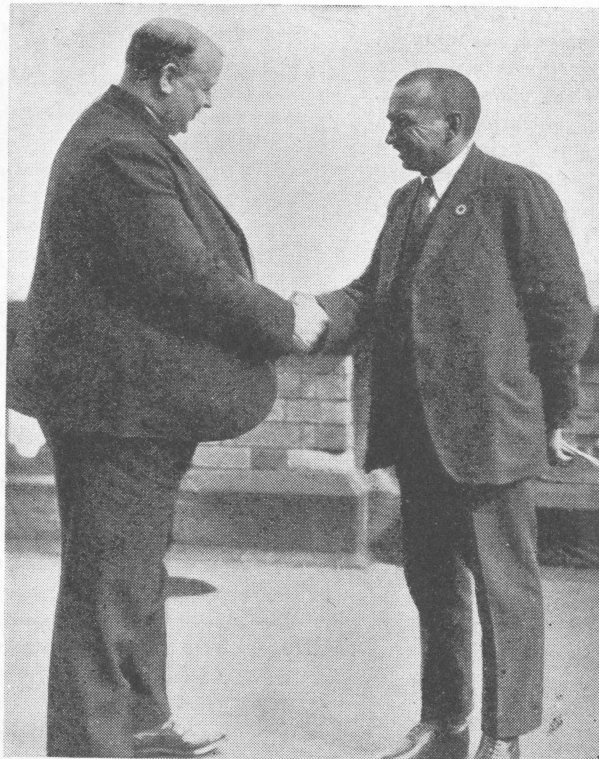
fraternal relations with the Russian workers was answered by a re-affirmation by the convention of the "Monroe Doctrine of American Labor" first endorsed at El Paso. A thinly veiled insult to Purcell was conveyed in the denunciation of "aggression by propaganda." This "Monroe Doctrine of American Labor," if the words of the resolution are to be taken at their face value, is just another weapon in the arsenal of American imperialism:

"Neither the Red International of Autocratic Moscow nor any other international may in complacency ignore this definition of American labor policy."

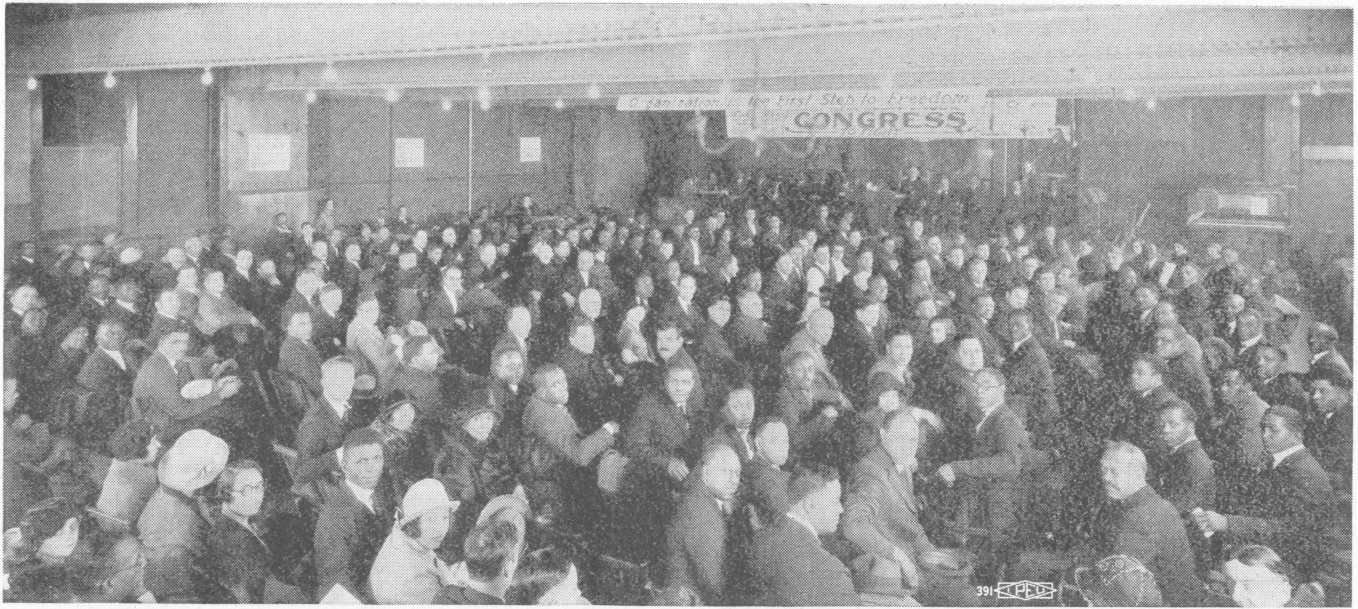
The weapon is to be wielded against the slaves of Wall Street everywhere.

A. F. of L. Bureaucrats Enemies of Workers' State.

To Purcell's request for fair treatment and recognition of Russia, the Atlantic City convention replied with a reso-



A. B. Swales, (left) Chairman of the British Trade Union Congress, and Tomsky, head of the Central Committee of the Russian Trade Unions.



One of the evening mass meetings held by the American Negro Labor Congress during its first convention. This picture was taken on the night devoted to a discussion of race persecution. The banner stretched across the hall reads: "Organization is the first step to freedom."

the earnest young men and women who are at the head of the movement. The fact that its enemies called it a mass movement shows what a low standard has been set for "mass" movements among such enemies. This makes a curiously interesting and profitable study.

A look behind the scenes of all Negro movements shows that they have practically all been nothing more than periodical conferences of "prominent persons," delegated by nobody and present only by virtue of a vague general recognition and the possession of the price of a railroad ticket. This is painfully true, and it shows the fatal weakness which has spelled sterility for previous Negro "movements." The essential fact was that behind such conferees there was no organizing of the masses. Bishops would be present because they were bishops, doctors because they were doctors, lawyers because they were lawyers, business men because, having succeeded in becoming business men, they were assumed to be the "natural spokesmen" for the Negro masses. No masses of hard-pressed Negro workers had gone through the organized process of selecting them. They were not delegates, which means that they were not a product of the process of organizing the masses. This was naturally so: doctors, lawyers, bishops and business men do not organize workers; and the Negro masses are workers.

That method of constituting Negro "conventions" was the outgrowth of old traditions. And how easily it was assumed to be the only method was rather humorously proved at this Negro Labor Congress, which reversed the method. A Mr. Reed appeared at this congress asking to be seated. Having realized that some sort of credentials would be required, he presented a document signed by the governor of the state of Oklahoma which certified that he was appointed as a delegate to the Negro Labor Congress. It was a perfectly serious document, and strictly in accord with pre-

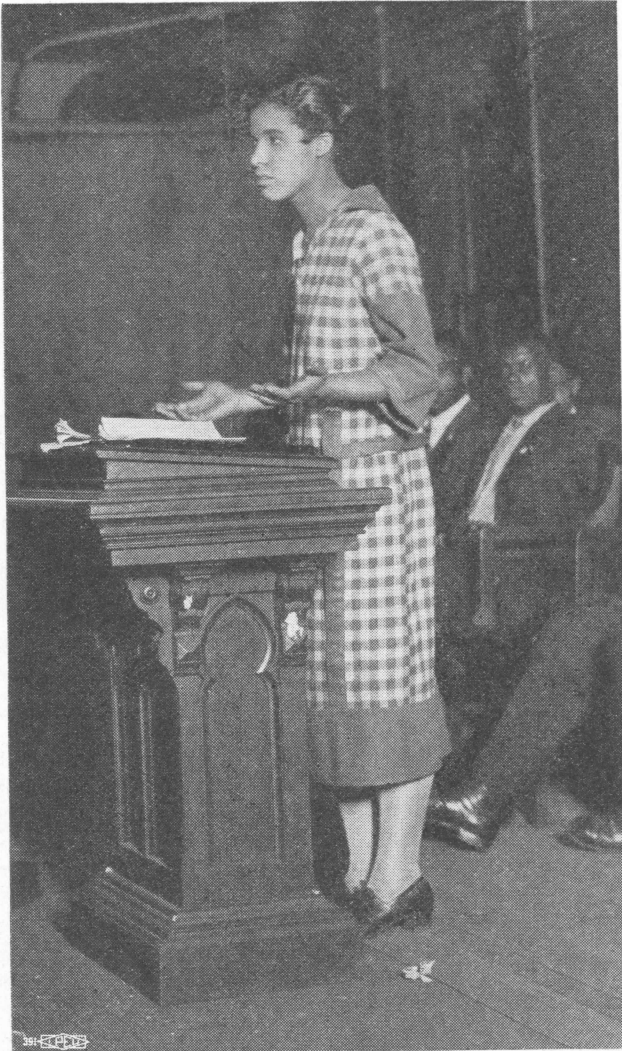
cedent. It meant that Mr. Reed was a prominent Negro citizen, and according to all tradition this was the sole requisite entitling him to voice in any Negro convention or congress. (He was seated as a fraternal delegate.)

Such traditions are clearly traceable to the Negro church, which for a full century was the only form of organization existing among Negroes. This trace is found also in the business proceedings of all previous Negro conventions, which have been mere "preachings" in which a leader, acting as chairman, ruled everything, decided everything, and hardly ever even thought of allowing a vote to be taken on anything.

Real Organization New Phenomenon Among Negroes.

It must be said that organization, in the true sense of the word, is a new phenomenon among the Negro masses. And when we understand this, and when we see the reversal of the traditions and forms of the past, we get closer to the answer as to whether there was a mass character to the American Negro Labor Congress.

A hard-boiled organizer will have to say that there were only a very few thousand of organized Negro workers behind the delegates who sat in the American Negro Labor Congress. There was only a small handful who directly represented trade unions, and to anyone who appreciates the essence of this as a Negro labor congress, the matter is highly important. Undoubtedly, however, the significance of this weakness is mitigated by the fact that many Negro "federal" labor unions which wanted to send delegates and which were watching with earnest sympathy its results, were finally terrorized out of sending their delegates by the threat of the president of the American Federation of Labor, who implied that these unions would be deprived of their charters if they participated. (A considerable number of unions were repre-



Abolition of all customs which result in economic and social discrimination, was the demand put forward by Correee Robinson, delegate to the American Negro Labor Congress from the Young Workers League of America.

sented indirectly through the delegates of "local councils" in which they participated.)

Another very serious weakness lay in the complete absence of representation of Negro farmers.

Must Build on New Foundation.

However, none but the blindest of fools could say that this Negro Labor Congress has no large significance. Whether the movement has or does not have a mass character is a question which was not conclusively answered by this convention, and which will be settled according to whether the young Negro leaders who have started it will now proceed to utilize the great beginnings which they have made. Unquestionably this convention resulted in forming a strong nucleus for a mass movement, and a nucleus which already has the begin-

nings of mass connections. The fact that it has succeeded in drawing together half a hundred young Negro leaders of exceptional ability—not "prominent persons," but young working class men and women with the gift and urge for organization and a clear goal, and having behind them at least a frame-work of mass organization—this fact will be ignored only by skeptics who know nothing of present day history.

The successful formulation of a clear program, and the reception of this program by the crowds of Negro workers who attended the congress, are also matters of much importance. This writer sat through the sessions of the congress from day to day, observing with keenest interest the development of the program, the uncompromising drive for what they wanted on the part of the delegates, the complete and enthusiastic unanimity of all delegates, ranging from Negro officers of A. F. of L. trade unions to the delegate "representing the State of Oklahoma," and the reverberations of the program among the un-picked local Negro working-class



"The American Negro Labor Congress marks the beginning of a new era in the history of American labor. A new day is dawning for the oppressed." — Lovett Fort-Whiteman, National Organizer of the Congress, at the opening session of the Convention.

audience which attended the mass meeting sessions by many hundreds. From these observations the writer can say with complete assurance that the program is not only one which gives the Negro movement the key to the problem, but that it is also one which spontaneously and completely captures the loyalty of the hitherto untouched Negro workers to whom it is offered.

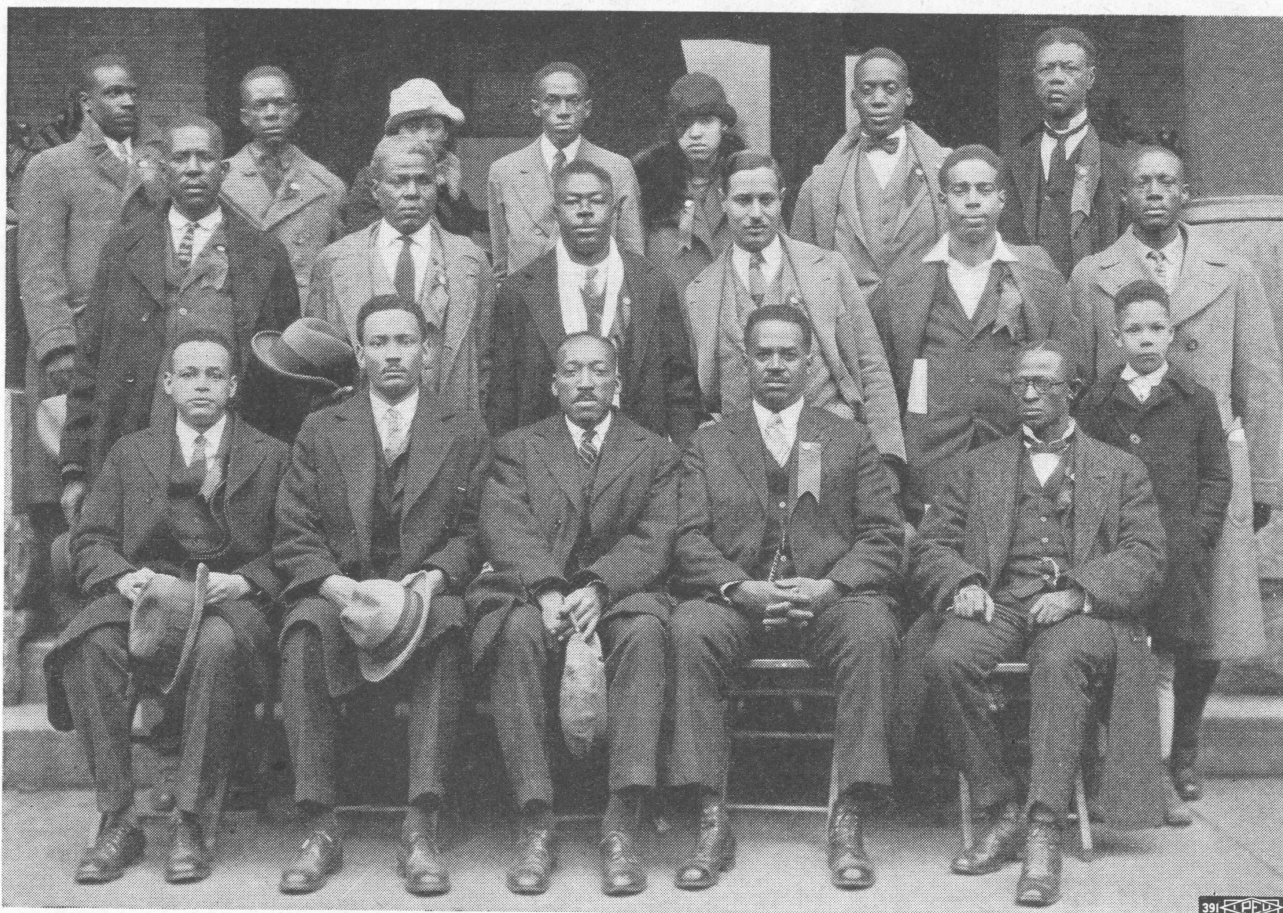
Dicks and False Race Leaders Fight Congress.

In this respect a severe test had been put upon the convention by the attacks which had been directed against it. Universally it had been condemned as "red," as Bolshevik. The entrance to the hall was crowded every day with about a score of Mr. Coolidge's federal dicks. Influential Negro politicians (under the direction of their white masters in the Republican party) worked overtime to terrorize the Negro population away from the affair, and newspapers with scare headlines virtually threatening the arrest of all who attended, were hawked at the door. Both the delegates and the big crowds of auditors were psychologized in advance to be suspicious and skeptical of any program that might be offered.

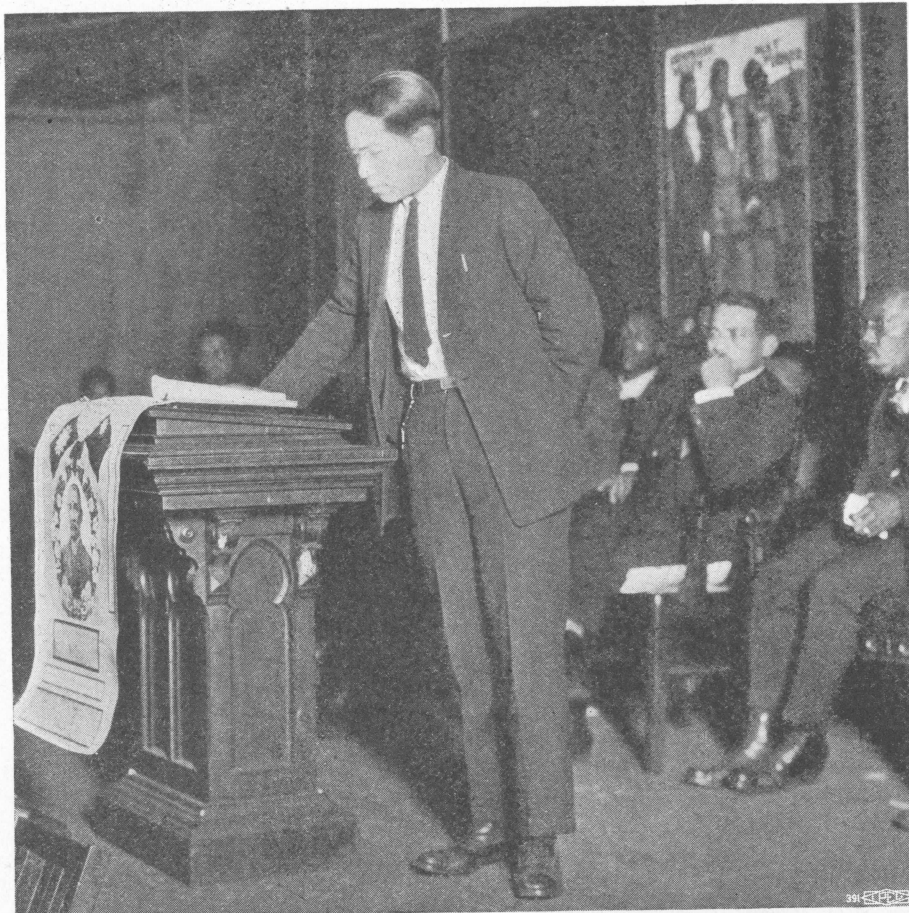
But the results proved that it is impossible to hold the masses of this oppressed people away from the measures which ring with sincerity and which go to the hard bottom of their problems. It was enlightening to hear the public reception given to the "first-comer" proposal in regard to the abolition of segregation of Negroes in the "black belt." It is a proposal to take out of the hands of landlords the right to refuse to rent apartments to Negroes or to fix the rental at a higher rate for Negro tenants; and this proposal of course means the taking over under public administration all apartment houses, an interference with the holy rights of property of the landlords. The fact that no one can conceive of any milder proposal for the abolition of the brutal segregation system, carried the proposal through with a whooping enthusiasm and complete unanimity (there being no "natural leaders" in the shape of Negro real-estate dealers present). The result of such a proposal is to present in a vivid way the realization that the liberation of the Negro masses from their condition of racial suppression (even the matter of residence segregation) involves a class struggle.

Green's Attack Flat Failure.

The same lesson was learned through the handling of Mr. William Green's attack upon the Negro Labor Congress



A group of the delegates to the American Negro Labor Congress. Nearly all of these men and women are workers, the majority of them in unskilled trades. The committee selected to carry on the work of the Congress for the next year includes a plumber, a miner, two steel workers and a hod carrier.



"The world of imperialism is passing. Let us join hands with all enemies of imperialism, disregarding race, creed or nationality."—C. T. Chi, of the Chinese Students' Alliance, who addressed the Congress on anti-imperialist night, when a crowd of eight hundred Negro workers demanded the withdrawal of American aviators from the Riff.

as a Communist affair. This attack, and attacks of the same kind from a hundred sources, brought a reaction which shows that the average Negro worker today is far in advance of the white worker in immunity to the poison of Gompersism. Mr. Green's platitudes are adjusted to the highly skilled craft unionist with a Ford and a cottage; and they roll off the back of the segregated, super-exploited Negro laborer like water off a duck's back. A half-hour in the hall of the Negro Labor Congress would convince anyone that the American Negro cannot be told that he is "free." Black men whose days are tortured with racial persecution in connection with a double degree of exploitation cannot be told to "let well enough alone." For them the "well enough" is not in sight. Nor can they be told that "the ideals of the American Federation of Labor" are being threatened by the Communists without being made to wonder who those fine fellows, the Communists, might be. It is safe to say that Mr. Green's attack made among the Negro workers a powerful propaganda in favor of Communism.

In fact, the many attacks of the enemies of the Negro people against the congress as a "Communist affair" simply brought about a condition in which hundreds of Negro workers in the audience, who had not previously any intimation of

what Communism is, were wildly applauding every mention of Communism. It was not a "Communist affair", but this had a tendency toward making it so.

In connection with Green's attack upon the Negro Labor Congress, it should be noted that the congress even before it opened had forced Mr. Green to make at least one gesture toward organizing Negro workers in New York. But in no case could the A. F. of L. bourgeoisie strike at the real problem by doing away with the Jim-Crow system: a few pitiful segregated unions "for Negroes" (like a southern railroad car) are about all that the A. F. of L. bureaucracy dreams of—for its purpose is not to give the Negro workers an instrument for liberation, but only to keep the Negro workers from building an instrument for freedom—to keep them away from the "social equality" movement and the Communists.

If there had been the slightest touch of sincerity about the maneuvers of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy, the resolution offered by a Negro delegate at the last convention of the A. F. of L. would not have been shelved as it was—that is,

the Green bureaucracy did not dare either to turn it down openly or to pass it. It was a resolution calling for the organization of Negro workers in the same way that white workers are organized, in the same unions on equal basis. To this day nobody can say whether the motion was defeated or not. It has the distinction of having been acted on in such a way that it was neither voted down nor passed. Such a cowardly evasion shows the need of the Negro Labor Congress.

Toward Race Hegemony of Negro Workers.

A factor of primary significance in this congress is that it marks a big step toward the **hegemony of the Negro working-class organizations in the general Negro race movement.** Hitherto there has been professional-class leadership, as a matter of course, and with no organizational basis. Now for the first time, groups of Negro industrial workers begin to elect their delegates. That this tends to throw the center of gravity of the Negro movement into the Negro laborers' ranks is obvious. And that many Negro middle-class intellectuals are bewildered and frightened by the fact, is but natural.

It was this rather than any "Communist domination," that scared the Negro middle-class intellectuals. As a matter of fact there have been Communists in every important Negro convention that occurred in the last two or three years. In

Let no one think that the dissatisfaction on the part of the Executive Committee of the Communist International with the Fischer-Maslow Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany has come suddenly. The problems examined and decided upon in the last resolution of the Comintern on the German question have been looked into and accepted thrice: Yet these decisions of the Communist International have not been executed. The last congress of the party merely brought forth this non-execution—though acceptance—policy in all its naked ugliness. The last Berlin convention of the party was a dead conference. It reflected the dangerous condition in which the party found itself, but it mirrored no life in the ranks of the party membership.

For nearly eighteen months the careful observer could see the development of a conflict between the Fischer-Maslow Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany and the Executive Committee of the Communist International. One need but recall the letter sent by Comrade Zinoviev to the Frankfurt congress of the party, the opposition by the Fischer-Maslow delegates to international trade union unity at the Fifth World Congress, the criticism of the German Party at the March, 1925, sessions of the Enlarged Executive Committee of the Comintern for its failure to normalize and democratize the party, the opposition of Katz and Scholem (allies of Fischer and Maslow) to a correct Communist policy in the elections in which Hindenburg was chosen president, the negotiations with the executive of the Comintern on the eve of the Berlin Party Congress, among many other instances, to see that all has not been going well for some time in the German section of the Communist International.

Thus we find in the letter of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the Communist Party of Germany:

"Up to the last, the Executive has sought to avoid the breaking out of an open conflict and the



Germany "Saved" by the Dawes' Plan!

resulting necessary organizational measures. . . . We have attempted to convince the Maslow-Ruth Fischer group of its errors by means of comrade-like co-operation. Despite our misgivings, we avoided an open conflict, in order that we might throw no difficulties in the way of the German Left, with whose political line the executive has solidarized more than once, at a moment when it was undertaking a severe struggle against the right and ultra-left deviations in the German Communist Party. . . .

"The Berlin Party Conference, and the events immediately following its close, proved finally to the Executive that all hopes of settling the differences in the course of normal co-operation are shattered. The attacks made by Comrades Maslow and Ruth

(Owing to an error, pages 87 and 88 have been reversed.)

ence with the American Socialists, they rejected any endeavor to set up a mechanical distinction between the Marxist party and the labor party, as two opposites which exclude each other. The sectarians in the German S. L. P., who accused them of "liquidating the leading role of the Marxist party," were criticized unmercifully by them. More than that, year after year they pointed out through the results of the progressing labor movement in America that the leading role of the Marxist party can be best realized and can only be realized within the great revolutionary mass party. Only when the Marxist—or putting it in modern phraseology—the Bolshevik party fulfills this task within an extensive proletarian mass party—a labor party—can the historically conditioned backwardness of the American movement be overcome by the practical experience of the masses themselves, and can the differences and antagonisms within the working class be settled. In his letter dated November 29, 1886, Engels formulates the task of the Marxist party, "to build up within this still wholly plastic mass a nucleus of persons who understand the movement and its goals" and

which later takes over the real leadership of the movement, as follows:

"But just now it is doubly necessary for us to have a few people who are thoroughly versed in THEORY and well-tested TACTICS . . . for the Americans are for good historical reasons far behind in all theoretical questions, have taken over no mediaeval institutions from Europe, but have taken masses of mediaeval tradition, English common (feudal) law, superstition, spiritualism, in short, all the nonsense which did not directly hurt business and which is now very useful for stupefying the masses. And if THEORETICALLY CLEAR FIGHTERS are available, who can predict for them the consequence of their own mistakes, who can make clear for them that every movement, which does not incessantly fix its eye upon the destruction of the wage system as its final goal must go astray and fail, many mistakes can be avoided and the process can be considerably shortened." (Letter to Sorge dated November 29, 1886).

In the letter of January 27, 1887 (quoted before), Engels



William Gropper.

The Social-Democrats After the Locarno Conference.

The Dove of Peace Turns Out to be a Snipe!



Maurice Becker

The anthracite miner, as the operators would have us picture him!

of their national associations are at their disposal. Their subsistence does not depend upon the immediate labor of their workers, while the workers always depend upon the immediate proceeds of their labor. And, on top of that, the bosses have it in their power to prepare much more effectively for the strike than the workers. Intensive production for the period immediately preceding the strike enables them to store goods for the market during the strike. The strike affords an opportunity to stimulate the market price of such goods so that, for a time, the strike may even increase the profits of the capitalists instead of stopping them.

Such is the case with the anthracite mine operators. They have large quantities of anthracite on hand and as long as this reserve lasts every additional strike day makes the price of this stored coal soar higher.

In addition to this the operators have on hand the culm bank coal. As long as the supply lasts every additional strike day improves the market for this dust and dirt, and—increases profits. Besides, every additional strike day weakens the striking masses and improves the chances of a settlement favorable to the bosses. When the bosses get

ready to talk with the strikers about settlement then the workers are already exhausted and the chances of the bosses to bring the workers to terms are so much greater.

Lewis Serves Bosses in Strike.

The leadership of a strike must be judged by the services that leadership renders the strike. Any judgment based on the services rendered by John L. Lewis, the president of the United Mine Workers, to the anthracite strikers must bring us to the conclusion that Lewis is serving not the strikers, but the bosses.

The most vulnerable spot of the mine operators is their property. The miners have it in their power to stop not only the profits by ceasing to work, but also to cause the capital to deteriorate and even partially to destroy it. All they have to do is to walk out of the mines 100 per cent. Water will do the rest. Underground water is the ally of the workers. But instead of mobilizing this ally, Lewis mobilizes regiments of the strikers to fight this ally in the interests of the bosses. Lewis has not to this day mobilized all the forces of the union in the strike. About 10,000 maintenance men are at work protecting the property of the