

Negroes Urged to Join With A.F.L. Progressives

By Cyril Briggs

Support by Negro workers of industrial unionism against craft unionism and of the rank and file movement and other progressive trends in the American Federation of Labor against the "entrenched Old Guard leaders," denounced as the bulwark of jim-crowism in the labor movement, was advocated by several leaders of the

National Urban League at its annual conference, which closed Wednesday evening at the Russell Sage Foundation Building, 130 East 22nd Street, New York City.

The conference was dominated by a militant and progressive note throughout its sessions, which opened last Tuesday morning. Leaders of the organization's activities in all parts of the country put themselves squarely on record, with few exceptions, in favor of labor's right to collective bargaining, genuine social insurance, organization of Negro youth and for a sharper struggle by the League against jim-crowism on Federal projects and in unemployment relief, and for a permanent Federal relief bureau.

A. F. of L. Old Guard Denounced

T. Arnold Hill, Director of the Department of Industrial Relations of the National Urban League, in a paper read before the conference on "Which Way After 1935?" indicated a growing consciousness on the part of the leaders of the organization for closer co-operation with the labor movement and a more militant program in the fight against jim-crow oppression. He advocated a Federation of organizations working in the interests of the Negro people, and close contact with all progressive groups.

Lester R. Granger, director of the Negro Workers' Councils of the National Urban League, speaking on recent developments in the labor movement, charged the Old Guard leaders of the A. F. of L. with side-tracking and evading resolutions and demands for the abolition, in all A. F. of L. unions and affiliates, of jim-crow barriers against Negro workers.

Reporting on interviews by representatives of the League with A. F. of L. officials during the recent Atlantic City convention, Mr. Granger told the conference that in each case those A. F. of L. leaders who

displayed open hostility or evasiveness on the demands for full equality in the labor movement, regardless of race and color of workers were defenders of outworn craft unionism. On the other hand, those A. F. of L. leaders who supported these demands were, he said, in every case advocates of the industrial union principle.

Pointing out that large sections of A. F. of L. workers are sharply opposed to jim-crowism and all practices which serve to lessen the effectiveness of the labor movement, Mr. Granger declared that the issue "boils down to industrial unionism versus craft unionism progressives versus the Old Guard."

The Urban League was asked by Merrill C. Work, representing the Joint Conference Against Discriminatory Practices, to support a five-point program drawn up by that organization for the betterment of the conditions of workers in general and the Negro workers in particular, as follows:

1. For government responsibility for relief.
2. Support of the National Negro Congress to be held in February, 1936.
3. Opposition to the present program of the C.C.C. camps whereby families are cut off from the relief rolls when their sons are sent to camps, although the boys are paid only the meager sum of \$25 to \$30 a month.
4. For a united front against war and Fascism.
5. For support of the Lundeen Social Insurance Bill.

Youth Report Given

A report on the American Youth Congress and its activities in uniting Negro and white youth on a program of militant struggle for peace and against Fascist reaction in this country, was given by Elizabeth Scott, vice-president of the Congress, upon the request of the conference.