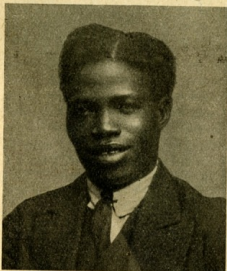


World Congress of Seamen

The first world congress of seamen, dockers and other water transport workers took place in Altona, **Hamburg** on May 20th-23rd.

There were about 193 delegates from 29 different countries. Many delegates directly from the colonies and semi-colonies, — South and Central America, Africa, India, etc. — were either detained on their way or unable to obtain passports.

Nevertheless, the congress showed a very enthusiastic fighting spirit and can truly be said to mark a step forward in establishing a united front among the water transport workers of the world against wage cuts, lengthening of the working day, unemployment, the imperialist war danger and the intervention against Soviet Russia.



Comrade G. Kouyaté, African revolutionary leader from the Sudan

A resolution of protest demanding the freedom of the boys was unanimously adopted. The delegates also pledged to carry the struggle for the liberation of the Negroes into every ship and harbour where defense committees will be organized. A resolution calling for the liberation of Tom Mooney and other political prisoners in the U. S. A. was introduced by Geo **Minck**, of the Marine Workers Union, and adopted.

The United Front.

The Congress agenda covered three points:

- (1) organization of a united action front against the shipowners' offensive;
- (2) struggle against the developing imperialist war; and
- (3) how to assist the organization of colonial workers.

The first point was dealt with by comrade A. **Walter**, the secretary of the

These facts should serve to remind the white workers of England that they have a great obligation toward the colonial peoples in supporting their struggles for freedom from the yoke of British imperialism.

Great Ovation for Scottsboro Mother.

As soon as the Congress was declared open, the delegates and visitors gave Mrs. **Ada Wright**, mother of two of the Scottsboro boys, a tremendous ovation and on the motion of George **Padmore**, the Secretary of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, elected her an honorary member of the Congress presidium.

Mrs. Wright and J. Louis **Engdahl**, the secretary of the I.L.D. afterwards addressed the Congress, telling the story of how the 9 little Negro boys were framed up by American ruling class justice.

I.S.H., who delivered the official report. After reviewing the general world economic situation, he outlined the political and organizational tactics to be adopted by the water transport workers in the colonies and the capitalist countries in building up a world wide fighting organization which alone will enable them to defeat the shipowners and their agents, the reformist leaders of the International Transport Federation.

About 80 delegates spoke on this question. They related their experiences in various strike struggles. They all adopted the program of the Congress and pledged themselves to continue their struggle on their return to their respective countries, in order to guarantee greater and greater victory along the whole capitalist front.

The War Danger.

Comrade T. Ray, a representative of the Marine Workers' Union of America, reported on the struggle against imperialist war. He pointed out that this struggle was part and parcel of the struggle of the seamen against the offensive of the bosses on wages, hours and working conditions. That in order to successfully struggle against imperialist war and for the defense of the Soviet Union it was necessary for all seamen and transport workers to carry on a day-to-day struggle against capitalist offensive, and to refuse to transport ammunition for the Japanese and other imperialist powers.

Colonial Work.

Comrade G. Kouyaté, the leader of the Seamen's Federation in France, himself a native of the Sudan, made the colonial report. Despite the limited time at his disposal, comrade Kouyaté reviewed the activities of the I.S.H. and its adherents in their work among the colonial seamen in Europe. He emphasised the importance of organizing the coloured seamen as an integral part of the united front of all water transport workers for joint struggle against the imperialists.

The scant treatment given to the colonial question by the congress, due to lack of time afforded the official reporter as well as the colonial delegates; reflected the greatest shortcoming in the whole congress. It indicates the tremendous underestimation of this problem which still prevails in the ranks of the I.S.H. and its sections. After the report of comrade Kouyaté, only two colonial delegates had the opportunity of discussing the important questions raised at the congress.

Comrade H. O'Connell, a Negro seaman from Cardiff, in a very interesting speech pointed out how, with the proper methods of work, and the putting forward of concrete demands, the S. M. M. was at one time able to rally more than 500 Negro, Arab and Somalis seamen under its banner. But due to political confusion and opportunist tactics which later developed, the colonial seamen drifted away from the organization. He stated that the



Comrade H. O'Connell of British Guiana, leader of the Colonial seamen in England

objective situation among the colonial seamen in England demanded that immediate steps be taken organize this section of the water transport workers who are willing to unite in common struggle with their fellow British workers for better conditions.

Comrade Padmore, in the name of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, greeted the congress on behalf of the Negro transport workers in the colonies and pledged support to the I.S.H. in carrying out its decisions, especially among Negro workers. He emphasized that it is the task of the I.S.H. and its affiliated sections to give the Negro workers active help in breaking through the barriers set up by imperialist, terror and reformist treachery to strengthen their already existing organizations and to create new ones in the colonies. He pointed out that in view of the policy of the shipowners, the reformist trade union leaders and the state apparatus to repatriate the colonial seamen in Europe back to Africa and the West Indies, the question of organizing these workers becomes a burning issue before the I.S.H. and its sections. It is the task of the advanced water proletariat in Europe and America to take the initiative of drawing these workers into their ranks and fighting their every day battles. It is only by putting forth concrete demands that will enable them to raise their standard of living, will be able to win their confidence and consolidate the united front between the white and the coloured workers.

In conclusion, comrade Padmore assured the Congress that the Negro workers were already taking up the counter-offensive against the capitalists as recent strike struggles in Durban and Port Elizabeth in South Africa show. These strikes were defeated by the capitalists who used the white workers as strike breakers, thanks to the treachery of the reformist labour leaders in Africa.

Therefore the immediate task which stands before the I.S.H. and its sections is to make a sharp orientation towards the colonies and to resolutely put into effect the colonial resolution which was adopted by the congress calling for the immediate launching of a campaign to organize the coloured seamen, not only in the metropolis, but in the colonies.

Negro Worker Nominated for Vice President

More than fifty years ago, a Negro worker by the name of Forsch — his first name has not been recorded — was lynched in the small town of Gainesville, Ga. The excuse given was the usual lying charge of "getting fresh with a white woman".

The grandson of this Negro worker was put forward by the Communist Party as its candidate for the vice-presidency, to serve with William E. Foster, presidential nominee, as one of the two chief standard-bearers of his Party in its election campaign at a monster convention of over 1,200 delegates in Chicago on May 30. This is the first time in the political history of America that a Negro has ever been nominated for vice-president.

The name under which the candidate for the vice-presidency on the ticket of the Communist Party will be known to the voters is James W. Ford. How he got this name is a story in itself.

Lymon Forsch, son of the Forsch who was lynched in Georgia, began working for the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company in Pratt City, Ala., in the 1890's. When he got his first pay-envelope, he found that the name had been changed to "Ford". He appealed to the foreman. "Keep that name", said the white foreman. "It don't matter about a nigger's name nohow."