

Preparations for the Fifth Congress of the R. I. L. U.

The first part of this article by the Negro organizer of the Trade Union Unity League told of the meaning of the Fifth Congress to the American workers, the events the problems that have arisen (such as Gastonia) since the Fourth Congress, and posed the general questions which he proceeds to answer in this section of the article.



By JAMES W. FORD.

Then come the great demonstrations on the streets of America, which resulted from the economic crisis of American capitalism. Let us take the March 6th demonstration that involved hundreds of thousands of workers in the cities and industrial centers of the country. In New York over 100,000 workers, not only demonstrated against the whole capitalist system but went into open clash with the police for work or wages—and for the right to the streets. Certainly no greater demonstrations have been held in this country. But of course, this is no accident. The Fourth Congress of the R.I.L.U. said that these battles would take place exactly because of the economic paralysis of world capitalism, and which has burst the bubble of boasted “American prosperity.”

Congress of the R.I.L.U. warned us that the precisely because of this fact the Fourth reformists and the social-reformists would play a role of opportunism, and betray the workers. Has this been true? What has been the role of the American Federation of Labor and the socialist party?

It is clear to every worker that the A. F.

of L. and the socialist party have not only become partners with the capitalists, but the A.F.L. has become an open fascist agent, beating down the workers, and the socialist party has come out in open betrayal of the workers—at Marion, Elizabethton, Greenville, etc.

In all of these southern struggles the A.F.L. has sold out the workers. At Gastonia, it denied that the worker has a right to self-defense and spurred the bosses on to lynch-law methods against the workers. In the Southern Illinois miners strike, the officials of the United Mine Workers of America had their hired thugs along with the bosses' police and militia forces, fighting the workers who were on strike.

William Green, president of the A.F.L., makes a trip to the South and is feted and banqueted by the Southern Chamber of Commerce, the city and public authorities, and declares that the fight in the South is not between the bosses and the A.F.L. officials, but between the A.F.L. and the Communists—and that this fight would go on to a bitter end.

It is for these reasons, mainly, that the Fourth Congress of the R.I.L.U. pointed out a new turn in policy and tactics—a turn for the creation of independent revolutionary trade union organizations of the working class, into which must be drawn the broadest masses of workers—the majority of the working class. That these steps have been taken in the efforts to build the Trade Union Unity League as the revolutionary trade union center of the American working class, is in line with the policy laid down by the R.I.L.U. The crystallizing of this organizational form will be the important task of the Fifth Congress of the R.I.L.U.

(To Be Continued.)