

St. Louis Convention of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights

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Article No. 3.

THE adoption of a new and more appropriate name with a looser form of organization was not one of the least of the problems which faced the convention of the American Negro Labor Congress at St. Louis. The new name adopted is the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

Since its organization in 1925, there had been objections to the name American Negro Labor Congress, some legitimate, some unfounded. While the new name has not disposed of all objections, it was nevertheless the considered opinion of the convention that the name League of Struggle for Negro Rights more adequately expressed the scope and purpose of the organization than had the old name or for that matter any other name proposed. The convention was unanimous in its adoption of the new name.

It is manifestly impossible to get into a name all the ideas behind an organization. The League of Struggle for Negro Rights expresses the main ideas of the purpose of the organization and that it is based on struggle and not on reformism and legalistic petitions like those organizations dominated by the belly-crawling petty bourgeoisie. Moreover, the name itself stresses the important lesson that struggle is essential to the securing of Negro rights, to the achievement of Negro liberation. The new name further removes the misconception that the league is confined to Negro membership alone or that its activities are limited to the confines of purely economic struggles. The fact that over one-third of the delegates to the convention were white workers, and that a number of them were elected to the National Executive Committee, gave unmistakable emphasis to the character of the league as an organization of white and Negro workers

banded together in the struggle for Negro rights.

Words like worker and labor were deliberately omitted from the new name. The convention did not intend that membership in the League of Struggle for Negro Rights should be confined to Negroes, nor yet to the industrial proletariat, Negro and white. The convention intended to draw into the struggle for Negro rights the broad masses, white and Negro, the farmers and agricultural laborers, and even those elements of the petty bourgeoisie who while not willing to support the economic struggles of the workers and poor farmers could yet be won on a nationalistic basis for the struggle for the right of self-determination, state unity of the Negro masses in the Black Belt.

By omitting terms like labor and worker from the new name of the organization the convention also gave notice of its intention not to confine its struggles for Negro rights to the field of labor. By designing its purpose as a struggle for Negro rights and not only ultimate Negro liberation, the convention rightly interpreted that struggle as including the very smallest fight against oppression and for all immediate demands clear up to complete Negro liberation.

The convention also decided that the organization should have a looser form than in the past. It is now possible for the masses to join the League of Struggle for Negro Rights in any form they desire, through affiliations of their lodges, clubs, unions, etc., or by joining a branch of the League. They can join any of the existent branches or they can organize a branch with six or more members, without regard to the existence of branches in any city. That is, they can organize as many branches in any city as suits their convenience. Each branch elects a small executive committee to direct the

of the miners, it is our task to organize and lead them. The development of the youth sections in the M.O.S.W.I.U., the American section of the International Committee of Revolutionary Miners, must go hand in hand with the development of the union itself, this field of work can't be underestimated and those who have a reluctance to it must be fought as elements who do not understand the revolutionary role of our union. Of utmost importance is the organization of the Negro workers within our ranks, placing them on the same level with the white miners, the Negro miners are militant fighters and our class brothers. The Womens Auxiliary must be developed into a weapon of the union.

The ninth world conference of miners analyzed the crisis of capitalism as it affects the mining industry and made decisions accordingly. We must struggle against any mechanical interpretation of the decisions. Unless these decisions are put into effect, we will not be successful in the organization and leadership of the huge economic struggles which are developing so quickly. Only with the application of these decisions, that we will build our revolutionary Mine, Oil and Smelter Workers Industrial Union in America, capable of leading the miners to victory over their bosses. Striving to coordinate and link the struggles of the miners of capitalist countries under the leadership and direction of the International Committee of Revolutionary Miners, thus achieving our aim, that of making the International Miners movement an integral part of the revolutionary trade union movement under the leadership of the Red International of Labor Unions.

work. Each branch and affiliated organization elects a delegate to the City Committee.

In this way the convention laid the basis for the building of a real mass organization and for the prosecution of a militant struggle against Negro oppression and for the unconditional equal rights of the Negroes.