

Pan-Pacific Labor Conference

(From Rotes Gewerkschafts Bulletin)
Translated by Whittaker Chambers.

The question of a Pacific Conference was first broached by the Austrian delegation at the II Congress of the R. I. L. U. (1922) at the time when an armed clash between the United States and Japan seemed imminent. But the immediate danger was removed and, together with that, the calling of a conference was postponed. The Conference of Far Eastern Transport Workers in Canton in 1924 at which representatives from China, Indonesia and the Philippines were present, created a substitute. That conference established a secretariat in Canton, for the purpose of maintaining relations between all the countries of the Pacific Ocean and for publishing a bulletin.

Fake League Confab Shattered.

Presently the situation changed. The problems of the Pacific came to the fore again. The League of Nations as well as the II and the Amsterdam Internationals became interested in Pacific questions. The League of Nations opened a branch in Tokio, the Labor Bureau of the League of Nations decided to call a Pan-Asiatic Labor Conference. This plan, whose realization was entrusted to Suzuki (chairman of the Reformist Trade Union League in Japan) and Joshi (General Secretary of the All-Indian Trade Union Congress), was shattered by the opposition of the Chinese workers. Suzuki had to relinquish his ideas.

In August 1926, the Japanese government established in Nagasaki another (certainly not a labor) conference which set itself very broad objectives. Japan hoped to create a Pan-Asiatic League of Nations in which she would play first fiddle. But the sweeping plans of the Japanese government proved a fiasco. Despite the strikingly cautious measures and the very guarded utterances of the delegates, public opinion in the Far Eastern countries was not deceived as to the motives of the initiators. It is sufficient to note the leading article in the completely bourgeois paper "Ming-shi" which says:

Reformist Conference Fiasco.

"Under the cloak of Pan Asiatic thought the other Asiatic peoples are to do yeoman service for the Japanese interests. Japan hopes to protect herself against the anti-imperialist movements in the Soviet Union, China and in Mongolia by a Pan-Asiatic movement directed against the American and European imperialists."

In anticipation of an inevitable armed conflict America and Japan carry on a lively propaganda in the countries of the Pacific. The United States has founded in Honolulu the so-called Pacific Institute, and, thru this powerful medium and an all-embracing agitative and propagandistic

work, is forcing the countries of the Pacific under American culture and American influence. The countless scientific, cultural, student, and other conferences, called by the Institute serve the same end, Japan, on the other hand, bases her efforts on the Pacific society, created under the direct protectorate of the Japanese government, with headquarters in Tokio and in the principal cities of other Pacific countries, but whose activities do not embrace labor circles.

The Australian trade unions did not relinquish their idea.

All Pacific Labor Represented.

The conference planned for May 1st 1927, in Canton, was thought to be extremely significant. In its organization committee sat representatives of the Trade Union Council of Sydney and of the Chinese Trade Union League. Careful measures were taken to ensure wide representation from the Chinese trade union movement, from the center and left wing of the Japanese Trade Unions and from the Japanese Peasant Movement which it is known stands in close relation with the workers. Other delegates from the Japanese colonies, Formosa and Korea, from the Philippines and Indonesia, from the American coast of the Pacific, i.e., from Canada and the United States, Mexico and Central America, were to participate.

Chiang's Betrayal.

The latest event, Chiang Kai-shek's betrayal and, as a result of that, the turmoil in a whole series of south-eastern Chinese provinces, and in Canton itself, radically changes the situation. Despite the statements of Lin Tin Sin, the present right Kuomintang dictator in Canton, who has promised his "support" to the delegation of the Central Committee of the Trade Unions of the Soviet Union, it is very doubtful whether it will be possible to open the conference. The trade union movement is today forced into illegality. At Li Tin Sin's orders hundreds, if not thousands, of the most active workers are being arrested in Canton. We have reports of the innumerable sacrifices of the Cantonese railway workers. Communists, and all that seems to hint of Communism, is hunted down. The union between Hankow, Shanghai and Canton is broken. And, on the other hand, the imperialist powers use every means to hinder the conference. The government of the Australian Union, for example, refuses to visa the passes of the delegates from the Sydney Trade Union Council. Announcement comes from Japan of the arrest of the Japanese delegates in Kobe.

Naturally this tremendously increases the difficulties of the pending conference, which is threatened by the interference, if not by the forcible dissolution, of Li Tin Sin and the reactionary and imperialist powers who support him. The situation in the Pacific Ocean where the most vital interests of the imperialists collide with indescribable fury with the movement of the millions of the masses defending their most elementary national and class rights, more than ever demands the support and the cooperation of the forces of the labor organizations of the Pacific Coasts. It is clear that the working class, its struggle, its organization, and its united action, will soon decide the fate of the conflict which amidst incredible suffering, is bursting into flame thruout the Pacific. The conference may be delayed: BUT IT MUST TAKE PLACE! The situation in the Pacific, the interests of the national revolutionary and labor movement demand it.

(The treachery of Chiang Kai-shek necessitated the postponement of the conference to May 15th, and its transference from Shanghai to Hankow. No news has yet been received of the events at the conference.

In addition to the arrest of the Japanese delegates and the refusal of the government to visa the passes of the Australian delegates, Losovsky and other prominent members of the Soviet Union delegates were held under arrest by British officials at Hongkong. They were later released.—H. F.).

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MOTORS TO COAST



...tine ambassador to the United States,
...bidding goodby at Washington prior
...through eighteen states to the Pacific
...yredon; the Ambassador; the Misses
...yredon.