Plan Militant Latin Labor Body at Montevideo Meet

By **WILLIAM SIMONS**
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MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (By Mail).—The congress for the formation of the Latin-American Labor Confederation, eagerly awaited by the revolutionary workers of the world, opened its first session last night in the Albeniz Theatre before an enthusiastic audience of 1,500 workers of this city, members of the trade unions belonging to the Uruguay General Labor Confederation, recently formed. I have talked with delegates from Uruguay and Argentina, and with numerous workers of Montevideo, and the opinion is unanimous that never in this region was there a meeting with as much spirit and as much revolutionary fervor as this.

The main feature of the first session were the speeches delivered by comrades from the various countries of Latin-America, and by fraternal delegates representing the Red International of Labor Unions, the Trade Union Educational League of the United States of America and the Unity Confederation of Labor of France.

Greet R. I. L. U. Delegate.

The delegate representing the Red International of Labor Unions received a thunderous welcome, with shouts of "Long Live the R. I. L. U.," "Long Live the Unity of the Working Class of the World." The delegate delivered a masterful speech, reviewing the world economic situation, characterizing it as full of potentialities for the revolutionary working class. He contrasted the methods and tactics of the Amsterdam International and the R. I. L. U. He showed the great interest the R. I. L. U. had in the development of the Latin-American labor movement and declared the present congress a mighty step forward for the Latin-American proletariat.

Both the speech in German and the translation in Spanish were punctuated with applause. The delegates and the Montevideo workers present showed they possessed an international outlook.

T.U.E.L. Delegates Welcomed.

True to one of the slogans in the theatre, "Down with American imperialism; long live the American working class," the delegates and workers present gave a splendid proletarian welcome to the delegates of the T. U. E. L. of the United States, William Simons and Isaiah Hawkins. Simons extended greetings, also, on behalf of the Pan-Pacific Secretariat; Hawkins, Negro miner from Pennsylvania, member of the National Executive Board of the newly created National Miners Union, also extended greetings from that organization.

The guidance given to the T. U. E. L. by the R. I. L. U. in such questions as organization, more determined struggle against the reformists, and in establishing a new trade union center. He pledged the workers of Latin-America that the T. U. E. L. would work in close harmony with them for a joint struggle against imperialism, especially American imperialism. He proposed a pact of solidarity between the T. U. E. L. and the Latin-American Confederation of Labor.

Hawkins brought the greetings of the miners, referring to the struggle leading up to the formation of the new miners' union, showing the betrayal of the officialdom. He depicted the miserable conditions of the miners at the present time.

He declared that he, as a Negro, welcomed the unity of the working class of Latin-America and the United States of America, because both the Latin-American workers and the Negroes were especially exploited.

The following spoke on behalf of the labor organizations of Latin-America: Siquieros, for the Mexican Unitary Labor Confederation; Januario, for the General Confederation of Labor of Brazil; for the Argentine delegation, Monaco; for Uruguay, Bacaicoa; for Paraguay, Milessi; for Bolivia, Blanco; for Colombo, Maecha; for Ecuador, Heredia; for Venezuela, Martinez; for Cuba, Junco; for the Provisional Committee, Migual Contreras and Juan Llorca; for the MOPR (South American Secretariat), Bartolome Fiorini.

The speech that stood out among them was the one delivered by Eduardo Raoul Maecha, the leader of the famous Colombia banana workers' strike, a 49-year-old Indian, thin and wiry and as young looking as they make them. Impressive was his story of the heroic strike of the banana workers and of the massacre by native troops under orders of the United Fruit Co. of a thousand workers after they had been surrounded. Gripping was his story of the defiance of the workers, knowing their fate, the moment they saw they were the memoment they saw they were their lives; they shouted out their determination to carry on the strike.

The commander's voice rang out twice. Each time, the workers shouted: "Long live the strike! Down with American Imperialism!" A third time, and the hired rifles brought bloodshed and death. Maecha ended by declaring that the struggle of the banana workers would continue until imperialism had been smashed and a new social order established.

Bacaicoa of Uruguay greeted the congress on behalf of the Uruguay General Unitary Confederation of Labor, ending up with "We will fight on unceasingly until we have put up the Red banner even in Wall Street," which sentiment was heartily endorsed by the T. U. E. L. delegation. Milessi of Paraguay declared this congress to be the first real Continental Labor Congress.

The first session came to a close with the presentation to the congress of a large Red Flag, bearing the name of the Confederation, by a group of proletarian women. Isabel Fernandez made the presentation, pointing out the role of women in modern industry and the need of organizing them. Comrade Siquieros, general secretary of the Mexican Unitary Confederation of Labor, accepted the banner on behalf of the Congress, pledging the women that the Latin-American Confederation of Labor would carry the flag all over the continent, organizing the proletariat for the final struggle against imperialism.

Telegrams of Greeting.

I. L. U., Anti-Imperialist League (Executive Committee, Berlin, and United States Section), South American Secretariat of the Communist International, South American Secretariat of the Young Communist International and the Teachers International (Paris).