

“ECONOMIC EMANCIPATION” IS PLATFORM OF “NEW NEGRO”

A. P. Randolph, Leader Of Brotherhood Of Porters, Champions New Doctrine

Carries Case of Race Workers Before Government Mediation Board—First Official Recognition In History.

By FLOYD J. CALVIN

NEW YORK, Jan. 20.—Is there a New Negro? Some say yes and some say no. I asked A. Philip Randolph for his opinion on the matter. His answer seems to take it for granted there is a new colored man extant. He says: “The distinguishing character of the New Negro is his spirit of revolt against the old ideology and the modern operant of Negro thought and action in particular; his increasing development of a world view point, and his militant insistence upon the application of the principle of equality in the valuation of his talent, ability and genius.”

Mr. Randolph is general organizer and leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first organized economic movement in the history of the race. By the same token Randolph himself is classed as a new Negro, the most outstanding new Negro, because he has 5,000 men behind him, the greatest number of any economic organization for the improvement of the race. These men behind Randolph form the majority of the largest single Negro working unit in American industry.

According to a recent public statement of Samuel McCune Lindsay, economic advisor to the Harmon Foundation, and professor of social legislation at Columbia University, “The economic foundations of society are those on which all our social structures rest.” James J. Davis, Secretary of Labor, in a recent article, said: “Some of the more turbulent disturbances in our history have been the result of the natural desire of man to dictate the conditions of his employment.” A. Philip Randolph himself says: “Practically no economic training has been given the Negro in the past. His training has been chiefly industrial manual or of the classical and religious type; and the chief forms of organization have been of the fraternal, religious, literary and civil rights nature. Never before has any systematic, definite, comprehensive agitation for economic labor organization as a method of solving the race problem been conducted among Negroes before the advent of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Thus, the movement to organize the Pullman porters and maids has been a national school in economics for the race.”

We are beginning to see, then, that the New Negro is seeking economic emancipation. He is seeking this emancipation through organized effort, by demanding that he dictate the conditions of his employment. And we have it on good authority that the Pullman porters and maids should come before all other economic subjects in the public mind. Since about 95 per cent of American Negroes are workers, any vital new movement affecting this mass would represent the New Negro. For that reason I went to A. Philip Randolph and asked him to tell me about the Brotherhood.

“The economic life of the Negro now has the center of the stage,” said Mr. Randolph. “This came about in the general trend in world affairs toward economics. Internationally we hear of ‘The Economic Consequences of the Peace,’ ‘Economic Treaties,’ etc. Nationally we hear of ‘mediation boards,’ ‘wage scales,’ ‘arbitration,’ etc., all showing that economic subjects are of first importance in the public mind. The Negro problem is inadequate. Religion, civil rights and politics are but a reflex of our economic life.”

“The Brotherhood is merely the beginning of organized effort among Negroes,” said Mr. Randolph. “Some day we hope to see a kind of economic organization, directing and controlling various crafts and divisions of labor among Negro workers. They will be taught how to strengthen themselves by the co-operation idea, by increasing their efficiency and getting more for their labor. Then the Negro can begin to solve some of the other problems which face him, such as are in the field of civil rights and politics. He will be able to make more headway because he will have the economic strength to back up his demands.”

“Already the Brotherhood has made a daring, historical move in its fight for economic emancipation, demonstrating that it is directing its energies intelligently. In order to prove that the Pullman Company is systematically robbing the porters, it has the Labor Bureau, Inc., making an investigation of both the Pullman Company's earnings since its inception, and of the porters' standard of living. The Labor Bureau is composed of eight nationally known economists and the effort represents the first time any scientific study has ever been made of the Negro workers' economic conditions by a group of trained minds. The Labor Bureau took the history of the Pullman Company, year by year, since 1869, and showed exactly how much profit it has made and how much surplus it has piled up at the expense of its employees. It also took the average porter's family and, according to budget statistics prepared by the U. S. Department of Labor, showed the porter cannot, on the wage paid him, live up to the minimum requirements of the American standard of living.”

I asked Mr. Randolph how he came to get started in such a tremendous undertaking. He said: “I was interested once on the Fall River line, and tried to organize the waiters to abolish the ‘glory hold,’ but was fired as soon as the bosses found out what I was trying to do. I became more deeply interested in the workers when a student at the College of the City of New York. There I was associated with a number of radical and liberal Jews, who smarted under the industrial conditions facing their own people. I began to think about the economic conditions facing my people, and from then dedicated myself to the labor movement.”

Mr. Randolph was born in Crescent City, Fla., in 1889. He finished Cookman Institute at Jacksonville, and left Florida in 1911. On his arrival in New York he found a job

Head of Pullman Porters And One Of His Staunchest Supporters



SAMUEL UNDERMYER

Large stockholder in U. S. Steel Corporation and famous lawyer, who contributed money to help Porters' Union.

as hall boy in an apartment house. Later he was porter and janitor for the Consolidated Gas Company. In 1913, '14, '15 and '16 he attended the College of the City of New York, taking courses in economics, history and philosophy. He was a frequent speaker at church forums, but his views were so pronounced and forceful he met considerable opposition. He founded the Hotel Messenger to fight the cause of the hotel workers, but after a time that died for lack of funds. Then he founded The Messenger Magazine, his present publication, to fight for economic freedom on a larger scale. Meantime he entered politics and was nominated by the Socialist party several times for assembly, then for State Controller, Secretary of State and for Congress. He has been fortunate in bringing to his assistance and to the assistance of the Brotherhood many white liberals and radicals of note, among whom are Professor Bowman of Columbia University, Algernon Lee, director of the Rand School of Social Science, ex-Governor Sweet of Colorado, Morris Hillquit, noted labor attorney, Donald R. Richberg, co-author of the new Railway Labor Act; Morris Ernst, representing Kuhn, Loeb & Co.; H. T. Hunt, former member of the U. S. Railroad Labor Board; Joseph Schlossberg, general secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; James O'Neal, editor of the New Leader; Mr. Orr, special organizer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers; Mr. Lovell, legislative director for the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen; Mr. Clark, vice president of the Order of Train Conductors; H. E. Willis, vice grand chief Locomotive Engineers; Hugh Frayne, New York organizer of the American Federation of Labor; Mary McDowell, head of the Department of Public Welfare of the City of Chicago; Mayor Brown of Seattle, William C. Thomas, executive secretary of the Society of Friends, representing a distinguished group of Quakers, and Samuel Undermyer, one of the largest stockholders of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, and nationally known lawyer.

WILMINGTON, N. C.

Leonard Harris, a member of the Wilmington, N. C., chapter of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, was shot and killed by a mob of white men in the city on Friday night. Harris was a prominent member of the organization and had been active in the struggle for the rights of the colored people. The shooting took place in the city's main street, and the mob consisted of about 50 men. Harris was shot in the chest and died shortly after he was taken to the hospital. The incident has caused a great deal of concern in the city, and the authorities are now investigating the matter.

STAUNTON, VA.

Mr. John Taylor left Wednesday for Evansville, Ind., on account of the illness of his brother, Mr. Rufus Taylor. Mr. Taylor was a prominent member of the community and had been active in the struggle for the rights of the colored people. The illness of his brother was a great loss to the community, and Mr. Taylor's departure has caused a great deal of concern.

Preacher Shot Down By Mystery Assassin

ARKADELPHIA, Jan. 20.—M. C. Conner, a preacher, aged about 35, is in the Towns and Sanatorium, perhaps fatally wounded from a shot fired at 9, as he was leaving his church near Dallas, in Dallas county, this morning. The assassin was a Negro, known to the congregation, which witnessed the shooting. The man fired twice, one shot taking effect. The caliber of the pistol has not been determined, as the bullet lodged in the preacher's abdomen. No arrests have been made.

RICHMOND, VA.

Miss Adeline Wallace, of 1008 W. Marshall street, has been very ill, but is building up the strength to order in the city. She is a member of the city's public schools. Miss Wallace, who spent the holidays to her city with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Wallace, of Richmond, Va., is a member of the city's public schools. She is a member of the city's public schools.

WILMINGTON, N. C.

The wedding was planned to take place at her home at 8 o'clock. The hall and garden of the home were decorated with greenery. The bride, Miss Adeline Wallace, was accompanied by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Wallace. The groom, Mr. W. A. Wallace, was a member of the city's public schools. The wedding was a very simple affair, and the ceremony was performed by a local minister.

LOUISVILLE, KY.

Dr. W. H. Bond, formerly of Williamsburg, Ky., has been appointed as resident physician at the city's public hospitals. Dr. Bond is a member of the city's public schools and has been active in the struggle for the rights of the colored people. His appointment has caused a great deal of concern in the city, and the authorities are now investigating the matter.

LAKE CHARLES, LA.

Mr. and Mrs. G. H. Harpin of 1805 South street, celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary on Friday. The couple were married in 1922 and have since then been very happy. They have three children and are now living in a beautiful home in Lake Charles, La. The anniversary was celebrated with a party at their home, and many friends and relatives were in attendance.

GOVERNOR RAPS MOB LAW IN N.C.

RALEIGH, N. C., Jan. 20.—“Those who undertake to take the law into their own hands must be taught the lesson that this belongs to the State and cannot be tolerated in North Carolina,” Judge W. A. Devin yesterday charged the members of the Wake County Grand Jury at the opening of the term of court which begins a six months tour of duty in this district for Judge Devin and the first court of the new term of Solicitor L. S. Braxfield.

Judge Devin declared that the whole State had been shocked by the beating of E. A. (Dolly) Jones, one-armed white merchant, and Sam Green, a Negro, on the night of December 13.

“Within a few miles of the State Capitol the mob spirit was raised,” Judge Devin declared. “I charge you to put forth all the energy you possess to uncover every instance where any man, no matter who, have undertaken to take the law into their own hands in a manner which brings a blush of shame to the cheek of every law-abiding citizen.”

“If you do this you will render a great service not only to the community in which you live, but to the State at large.”

The Jones flogging resulted in the indictment of 11 men at the December term. Those indicted included Dr. J. R. Hester, a prominent citizen of the county; Clyde Weathers, a deputy sheriff, who has resigned; and J. W. Belcher, a road supervisor, who has been allowed to retain his position.

KEOKUK, IOWA.

A plea for respect for law will cause men to respect the law, said the doctrine that the law must be taken as it is and not as any citizen would like for it to be ran all the way through the charge which consumed more than an hour.

CLIFTON FORGE, VA.

The community was shocked last Saturday evening when a man reported that Mr. Albert Johnson had been shot and killed. The man who reported the shooting was a member of the community and had been active in the struggle for the rights of the colored people. The shooting took place in the city's main street, and the man who was shot was a member of the community.

LAKE CHARLES, LA.

After the first month of the elopement the fellow sits down and wonders what all the rush was about. If you get the right perspective, life is interesting even when it's the most perplexing.

BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

By JOHN L. MITCHELL, 903 N. 13th Avenue

Friday, January 21st, Miss Lula Herd was hostess to the Alpha Alpha club, the members made a real good showing in their recent contest. The roll was called and each member responded by giving current events. The contest was entirely a business one.

The hostess invited the guests into the dining room and served a delicious lunch. Tiny dishes of candy were used as souvenirs.

The Stinson club met with Mrs. E. W. Hayes, Wednesday afternoon, January 19th. The meeting was opened with prayer and the singing of the National Anthem. A report on conditions at the Girls' Reformatory was made by Mrs. E. W. Hayes.

Under “Today's Thoughts,” who's who of the noted musicians of the race were mentioned. Mrs. E. W. Hayes gave a review of the program and the club adjourned.

Mrs. E. W. Hayes gave a review of the program and the club adjourned. The hostess served a delicious lunch and the guests enjoyed it very much.

The regular community sing will be held at the Industrial High school, Sunday afternoon, at 3:30 o'clock. A very excellent program is being planned and a musical treat is promised to all who attend.

Thursday, January 6, Mrs. L. R. Hall was hostess to the Juliette Whist club at her home in Woodbury. The club members played whist and a very enjoyable time was had.

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