

Reflections on the Negro Sanhedrin By W. H. A. MOORE

THE Negro Sanhedrin came, had its say, and time alone will be able to tell whether or not it has added anything to the sum total of human social knowledge. The forces which created it are easily seen; the elements that determined its character stand out in startling bold relief; and it must be acknowledged that the conclusions which it arrived at present an immaturity of thinking strikingly at variance with the importance of the social issues which it sought to discuss.

As I see it, it was not an impressively profound body. It may be its elements were too diverse to unite on a soundly constructed social program. This must not be construed to mean that nothing came out of the movement; that would be far from the truth. What it indicates to me is that the Negro of the Western Hemisphere has not yet wakened to an appreciation of his present-day social duty.

No big central figure looms up in our consideration of the conference. The personality of Kelly Miller dominated the conference. It is true, but it was only in the alert, watchful way that so often characterizes the manner of the politicians. The delegates of the Workers Party, and the African Blood Brotherhood got a large dose of the watchfulness of this professor from the District of Columbia. But for friends at court their recommendations would have been buried as material destructive of what was at bottom the chief reason the leaders helped to promote the conference. It was not the business of the position assumed by this particular set of delegates that was questioned by Dr. Miller. He followed a policy of expediency which demanded that radicalism of any sort should have little, if any, place in the social program that was to be laid down by the conference for the Negro race in America.

Chamber of Commerce Influence.
The executive secretary of the Negro employment bureau of the local Chamber of Commerce, the Chicago branch of the Urban League, was finally chosen as chairman of what Dr. Miller designated as the "Commission on Labor." Lovett Fort-Whiteman, the leader of the Workers Party delegation, protested with eloquent vehemence against what he asserted to be a deliberate endeavor to stifle the real voice of Negro Labor in the deliberations of the conference. But "Social Welfare" was in the saddle digging a sharpened spur and applying a cruel whip of disapproval whenever the conference showed even the slightest disposition to kick out of the traces. Hence the all-important issue of Labor was relegated far to the rear in the body's consideration of the big problems of the hour.

What were the big questions of the hour? "The Basic Importance of the Physical Stamina of the Race," discussed by the physicians; "Our Educational Program," discussed by a group of college officials; "The Function of the Negro Press," discussed by representative Negro newspaper men and women; "The Afro-American's Relation to the World-Wide Race Movement," discussed by a small group of writers; "The Function of Fraternal and Benevolent Organizations in Race Welfare," discussed by leading officials of secret and benevolent organizations; "The Religious Factor in Race Welfare," discussed by several Bishops of the several religious organizations; "The Effect of Religion on Race Relations," discussed by another group of distinguished religiousists; "The International Co-operation in Civic and Social Betterment," discussed by welfare organization leaders; "The Function of Agitation in Race Betterment," discussed by leaders of organizations engaged in the

work of procuring "Equal Rights" for the Negro; "The Woman's Part in the Race Problem," discussed by the women delegates; "The Part of the Young College-Bred Negro in Race Betterment," a discussion in which the college men and women showed off to rather good advantage; "The Place of Business in Race Betterment," discussed by several successful business men and women. Labor as a question of first rate importance has no place in this rather elaborate program. As I see it, it was a "Social Welfare" program designed to strengthen the already strong hold which the nation's Chambers of Commerce have on the economic strings of the American Negro's life.

Leaders in Panic at Labor.
I get my clue in this connection from what I saw of actual panic whenever there came a slip in the workings of the prepared program. Consternation reigned during the unforeseen fight led by Comrade Fort-Whiteman for a place on the program for an unabashed discussion of the Labor problem as it affected the life of the Negro in this country. At one part of this discussion Leader Miller himself had to play the Workers Party delegation that Labor would be given a place in the official document that was being prepared by the several commissions as the statement of the Sanhedrin's position on all public questions affecting the life of the race. This was done by what was called the "Fighting Commission," with the result that the Labor question got some consideration and position in the document given out as the general program of the Sanhedrin.

There were two old slants given to the question of segregation at the conference. The northern elements wanted unqualified condemnation of the offenses committed in its name. The Southern elements, however, en-

deavored to prevent frank and open discussion of this issue. The contention of the Southerners was that an unbridled discussion of segregation on the floor of the Sanhedrin would hinder the interracial work that was now being done especially if the conference should take too decided a stand in this particular.

"There is no justness in pussy-footing and no common sense in side tracking this important matter," retorted the Northern elements.

"Yes, we know," answered the Southerners, "but we have got to live in the South, which is a very different thing from toasting your shins up here in Chicago."

As a consequence a soft pedal was put on discussion although there was a loud flourish of generalities in that part of the "big" documents offered for the general public's consumption.

Optimistic For Future.
I do not know what trend the next meeting of the Sanhedrin will take. I believe, however, that the outlook is upward. It must be admitted that at the conference just closed Chairman Miller's hands were held and directed by an invisible force of tremendous power—the sinister influences of capitalistic interests determined to maintain the minimal relations that have existed too long between the black and white proletariat in all the sections of the land. But the ground has been broken.

A distinct desire to break away from many of the older moorings has been shown. It was not a radical outbreak by any means. Yet it was clearly manifest that the old order of thinking and the old character of action is about to be laid aside by what, for the moment, can be named the "New Negro." Let there be no fear for the future, the Negro is now in the fight for Human Progress, and will not turn back.

THEY MURDER OUR CHILDREN

SOME weeks ago a policeman told the following story which he was walking in a quest for food in the north of Berlin. A boy had stolen some rolls from a bakery. He was caught and hauled before the police, and there he insisted that he had not stolen for himself but for his sick mother—"She cannot live on potato peelings alone." The policeman was instructed to verify the statements of the child. He did so and actually found a woman, thin, like a skeleton, unable to leave her bed and apart from the arrested boy three other hungry children. It was proved that the whole five had actually been living from potato peelings.

This is a dry statement of the facts. One can imagine this woman and her children who starve even to the death of potato peelings. One wonders how it was necessary to ruthlessly maintain what still stands? What would happen if the quiet enjoyment of property were no longer guaranteed? Think of the consequences! Today it is the potato fields of the big farmers and junkies, but tomorrow already it may be the gold of the citizens, the state bonds, shares, foreign currencies. Today they steal. Tomorrow they will expropriate. If property is not guaranteed what will become of trade and commerce? Therefore, one must shoot! Up to the moment, in Britz alone two men, one woman, one boy and two girls have been shot. There are further victims in other places. Still more must be shot for the danger is great. Do you see those white hollow-cheeked faces with their sunken glowing eyes in line before the potato shops? They are an incentive by their very existence. Behind those bony foreheads there are thoughts of high treason. Nothing is sacred to these starved people. They have nothing to eat and they fill themselves with hatred against everybody who has, against everybody who amasses, bargains, speculates and plunders in the good old bourgeois manner. These starved people are capable of anything. They have nothing to lose. They are quite ready to throw away their lives, for even those no longer belong to them; they are in the hands of the Stock Exchange wolves and the barons of industry. Should they risk their lives in the last throw, they might win and there would be an end to the century old empire of capitalist happiness.

Not! The rifles and machine guns must rattle. The armed police must be mobilized everywhere. The army must be sent to Saxony to stifle the hunger there. Dead workers lie on any street in Saxony. More must join them. Men, women, boys and girls.

Yes! The starving must be murdered or capitalism will perish. Murder! The murder of men, women and children—or the victory of Communism!—L. L. BURNES

at a quarter to seven, in the fields of the farmer Frede at Britz, rifle fire directed by the police at potato raiders resulted in the deaths of a boy of twelve years and a girl of sixteen, and in serious injury to a further girl of sixteen."

Two children are killed and one is badly wounded. Yes, but the potatoes are safe. Two children are completely and one partially satisfied, and all that was necessary—three small pieces of lead. The potatoes were saved, property protected from all damage and the basis of the Christian State remains intact, and all at a total cost of the torn bodies of three children.

Do not rail at the cruelty! The cost was not too high. For what was at stake? Is not the German economy in the greatest danger, is it not threatened by ruin? Is it not necessary to ruthlessly maintain what still stands? What would happen if the quiet enjoyment of property

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