FILE

AFL Council Cuts Loose From W[illegible]
Workers Welcome Soviet Visitors

By GEORGE MORRIS

Apparently unconcerned with the world's fast-moving events, the 15 members of the AFL's executive council meeting in Chicago's Drake Hotel, quietly severed the last international labor ties they still had.

William Green announced that the AFL would not be represented at the meeting of the practically extinct International Federation of Trade Unions next month in Paris. He conceded that this defunct body will finally go out of existence and give way to the new and powerful World Federation of Trade Unions that will be launched a few days later.

This comes in face of the world-shaking atomic bomb disclosure, entrance of the Soviet Union in the war against Japan and after the Potsdam decisions which gave new evidence of United Nations unity and of the new world that is shaping.

The AFL's leaders are still at their old stand slandering the USSR and its unions which total four times the AFL's in membership. Neither domestic labor unity nor world labor unity concerns them. As far as they are concerned, the National Association of Manufacturers can press for its reconversion program unchallenged. And they are not worried a bit by the efforts of Senator Vandenberg and his associates to cripple the San Francisco Charter machinery.

FACE NEW PRESSURE

But the 15 old gentlemen on the council face new pressure. A delegation representing the Committee for AFL Affiliation with the World Federation of Trade Unions, recently formed at a Cleveland conference of AFL labor leaders, will seek a hearing before the council Monday. They will place before it the reasons why even the conservative Council minds should change on the issue.

Meanwhile, a delegation of 10 Soviet trade union leaders headed by Vassili Kuznetsov, chairman of the All-union Council of Trade Unions, is receiving a rousing welcome as it tours America's cities under CIO auspices. This is the first of several delegations that the CIO invited in a move to strengthen international labor ties. French and British delegations are to arrive soon and the CIO will return the visits.

The significance of such an exchange of goodwill ambassadors can hardly be overestimated. For 27 years American workers have not seen a Soviet labor leader in person. As Kuznetsov noted in his Carnegie Hall mass meeting, some people even showed surprise that Soviet people wear suits and neckties and dresses like our own.

As they visited factories, union halls and gave press interviews in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, New York and other cities, they were bombarded with questions on the ordinary day to day affairs of Soviet unions. How do they settle grievances? Why aren't there strikes in the USSR? What are their postwar plans? Are wages cut when hours are reduced? Are AFL charges of "government domination" true?

GAVE THE FACTS

Kuznetsov didn't polemize with the AFL. He merely gave factual information. That shattered AFL propaganda far more effectively than arguments could. When Kuznetsov described how a labor-management grievance setup operates from the shop to the top central committee of the affected union, and the final decision is with the union, people easily realized why there are no strikes.

"We don't see any sense in having strikes just to show that it is permissible to strike in the Soviet Union," said Kuznetsov.

Equally impressive was the information that reduction in hours from 10 or 12 to eight, is not accompanied by a cut in take-home pay. And Kuznetsov pointed out further that in the Soviet Union not unemployment but a shortage of labor is the difficulty that confronts the country.

The visit of the delegation is also of tremendous educational value in CIO ranks, giving far greater content to the internationalism that has been developing among its members.

There is no doubt that the tour has affected AFL members. Carnegie Hall mass meeting, with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Sidney Hillman among the welcoming speakers, and similar welcomes at city halls of New York and elsewhere, go far in making the 15 old men at Chicago look very ridiculous.

DELEGATES TO BRITAIN

But the AFL will look especially ridiculous when its secretary-treasurer George Meany and vice-president William C. Dougherty appear before the Blackpool conference of the British Trade Union Congress on Sept. 12. They are the AFL's fraternal delegates. British trade unionists are in a jubilant spirit over the political power that has just been won. The representatives of the BTUC, meeting with those of the French, Italian, Soviet Union and other unions later in the month, will be truly able to feel that the decisions they make at the Paris constitutional WFTU congress are decisions of men and women who hold decisive political influence in their respective countries. In all of them labor is the strongest for

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