ANNOUNCE REORGANIZATION

CLAUDE WILLIAMS ELECTED DIRECTOR; NEW PLAN ON PAGES 2 AND 3

Reorganization Plan Will Bring Commonwealth Closer To Trade and Agricultural Union Movements of South

On August 15 the administration of Commonwealth College announced the institution of a reorganization plan affecting every phase of the school's work. The plan, which is intended to orient Commonwealth to the South, will bring the school into closer working alliance with trade and agricultural unions from Texas to Florida and from Missouri southward to the Gulf of Mexico.

The reorganization plan provides that Commonwealth be a non-factional labor school, basing its activities in labor unions of the South and Southwest and lending full assistance to trade union organizing campaigns in the South.

Under the reorganization plan Commonwealth's courses of study will provide basic instruction for labor union activity. Instructors are to be secured principally from the South and West and not more than 25 percent of the student body will be enrolled from sections other than the South whenever possible.

The plan makes several important changes in the national advisory board and in the administration of the school. To prevent the possibility of any one political group gaining domination over the policies of the school's administration, the plan states that no political units shall be officially recognized as such in campus groups by the school.

Several new activities which Commonwealth will undertake are also outlined in the plan. The school grounds and facilities are to be made available for trade unions and educational groups desirous of holding conferences, seminars, and short training courses. Extension work is being planned in the form of field classes, in cooperation with Highlander Folk School and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, and special summer courses at appropriate Negro institutions.

With the reorganization plan in effect, the college administration is prepared to assume its responsibilities and share in the nationwide battle for industrial democracy, which faces one of its most serious tasks in the South.
THE REORGANIZATION PLAN OF THE rapidly expanding labor movement demands a corresponding expansion of a realistic program of worker's education.

To conserve the gains now being made by the aggressive organizational drive of both industrial and craft unions, it is imperative that the program and equipment for training workers be strengthened and expanded to meet the increasing need for mature thought and action in the labor movement.

There are only three resident labor colleges in the United States to provide training for labor activity among the 4,000,000 organized workers and organizational activity in labor's campaign to organize the 40,000,000 unorganized workers of this country.

These resident labor schools should become an integral part of the labor movement of the areas in which they function; their program should be indigenous to the region they serve and their faculties and student bodies be compatible with native workers.

The conditions peculiar to the South and the vicious techniques employed by the reactionary forces make organization of workers in this section especially difficult and the maintenance of class morale and militant labor action even more difficult.

Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas, is desirably located in the deep Southwest, is a large, well equipped pioneer resident labor school, and is the only labor school in this area.

Given, that the foregoing statements are correct and their implications valid, it is the mutual desire of both Commonwealth College and its supporters to adapt the program, curriculum, faculty and student body of the college to deal effectively with the economic conditions and labor union issues of the South and West.

We, the undersigned labor leaders, professional workers and friends of labor, pledge our moral support to Commonwealth College and will assist as far as practicable the development and execution of its programs of action and courses of study based upon the following suggestions:

1. That Commonwealth be Non-Factional:
   That Commonwealth be a non-factional labor school, partisan only to the wider interests of labor.

2. That Commonwealth be Oriented to the South:
   That Commonwealth's program be designed to correct the present economic conditions and to constructively further the labor movement of the South and Southwest.

3. Labor Union Activity:
   (a) That Commonwealth's work in the labor movement be done only in concerted action with labor unions, Central Trade's Councils, and State Federations of Labor, and in cooperation with recognized labor union leaders;
   (b) That Commonwealth lay special emphasis on establishing and strengthening relationships with labor unions to be found active in key industries within the radius of the school's operations, viz.:
      1. Ladies' garment workers in Kansas City, St. Louis, Memphis, Little Rock, Dallas, etc.

2. Oil workers in the Arkansas-Texas-Oklahoma-Kansas area.
3. Lead and zinc miners in the tri-state area: Oklahoma, Missouri, Kansas.
4. Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas coal miners.
5. Bauxite miners in Arkansas.
6. Automobile workers: St. Louis and Kansas City.
8. Iron and steel workers: St. Louis and East St. Louis area.
12. Agricultural, canning, packing house, and allied workers: throughout the South and Southwest.
   (c) That Commonwealth make available its school grounds and facilities for union conferences, seminars, short training courses, etc., to be conducted either by leaders provided by the interested union, or by the school, or by the two groups working together;
   (d) That Commonwealth lend all feasible assistance to trade union organizing campaigns.

4. Extension Work:
   That Commonwealth provide members of its faculty to assist unions in setting up and conducting classes in strategic communities where elementary training among resident native workers is needed and desired;
   (a) That field classes be set up under faculty members of Commonwealth College, Highlander Folk School, and officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union to provide short intensive periods of basic instruction for Negro and white cotton farm workers in the vicinities of Muskogee, Little Rock, Memphis and St. Louis;
   (b) That special summer courses be conducted at appropriate Negro institutions for Negro ministers, religious workers, public school teachers and college students to develop a primary understanding among the Negro people of the South of the economic forces, class issues and the ethical basis of the labor movement.

5. Curricula:
   (a) That Commonwealth's courses of study provide basic instruction for labor union activity especially among the agricultural and industrial workers of the South and West;
   (b) That special summer sessions in the Labor Implications of Religion be held at the college for white rural ministers and ministerial students of the South;
   (c) That a survey of the Social-Economic Patterns of Southern Religion, emphasizing how labor organizers may cooperate with the progressive religious programs of this section, be included as a regular part of curriculum in the course for southern labor organizers.

6. Faculty Reorganization:
   That the faculty of Commonwealth be reorganized and instructors be secured principally from agricultural, industrial and
professional workers of the South and West, knowledge of their subjects and the ability to teach to be the final test for eligibility.

7. Student Enrollment:
That students for Commonwealth College be secured from the South and West as far as possible, not more than 25 per cent of the student body being enrolled from other areas when applications from eligible students of the South and Southwest are on hand.

8. Political Influence:
That no political party, or political groups or factions stipulate either who shall serve on the faculty of Commonwealth or who shall be admitted to its student body;
(a) That no political units, locals or factions be officially recognized as such in campus groups by the school.

9. Reorganization of National Advisory Committee:
That the National Advisory Committee of Commonwealth be reorganized and broadened to include the support of nationally recognized leaders in the fields of labor, religion, politics, education, and science.

10. Administration:
That an executive council to direct the administration and policies of Commonwealth be set up including persons in its membership from the labor unions and professions of the South and West with sufficient latitude for wholesome self-direction of the college being resident in the administrative corps;
(a) That the director and the permanent teaching staff with adequate student representation constitute the administrative corps of Commonwealth College.

11. Constitution and By-Laws:
That the constitution and by-laws of Commonwealth be rewritten to include the provisions of its new program and curricula.

12. Immediate Procedure:
That the administrative corps of Commonwealth proceed immediately to initiate and execute the above suggested program.

SIGNED AND ENDORSED BY:
ROGER N. BALDWIN, executive secretary, American Civil Liberties Union;
JOHN H. BOSCH, president, Farmers National Holiday Association;
J. R. BUTLER, president, Southern Tenant Farmers Union;
GEORGE S. COUNTS, editor, "Social Frontier";
JEROME DAVIS, president, American Federation of Teachers;
CARL HAESSLER, Federated Press Central Bureau;
J. B. S. HARDMAN, Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America;
DONALD HENDERSON, president, Cannery Agricultural, Packing House and Allied Workers of America;
GARDNER JACKSON, C. I. O. Representative, Washington, D. C.;

IRVIN KUENZLI, executive secretary, American Federation of Teachers;
H. L. MITCHELL, secretary, Southern Tenant Farmers Union;
A. PHILIP RANDOLPH, president, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters;
REID ROBINSON, president, International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers;
MARK STARR, educational director, International Ladies' Garment Workers Union;
HELEN S. ASCHER, Joint Committee for Southern Labor Schools;
J. AUSTIN BEASLEY, vice-president, Workers Alliance of America;
W. G. BERGMAN, vice-president, American Federation of Teachers;
W. L. BLACKSTONE, member, Southern Tenant Farmers Union and President Roosevelt's Farm Tenancy Commission;
WINIFRED L. CHAPPLE, national committee, American League Against War and Fascism;
T. B. COWAN, chairman, Fellowship of Southern Churchmen;
JAMES DOMBROWSKI, secretary, Highlander Folk School;
HAROLD E. WEX, industrial secretary, Fellowship of Reconciliation;
LESTER GRANGER, National Urban League;
MARY FOLEY GROSSMAN, vice-president, American Federation of Teachers;
LEM HARRIS, Farmers National Holiday Association;
CHARLES J. HENDLEY, president, American Federation of Teachers, Local 5;
DONALD KOBLE, secretary, New Era Schools;
E. B. MCKINNEY, vice-president, Southern Tenant Farmers Union;
EDWARD M. NORMAN, member, executive council, United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing House and Allied Workers of America;
MYRA PAGE, journalist and novelist;
OLIVER A. PETRONE, Administrative Assistant in Workers Education, W. P. A.;
J. B. ROE, president, student body, Commonwealth College;
WARD RODGERS, Arkansas-Oklahoma, Agricultural, Cannery Workers of America;
NANCY LEA SMITH, vice-president, American Federation of Teachers;
HARRY C. STERN, vice-president, American Federation of Teachers;
ODIS L. SWEEDEN, Oklahoma Southern Tenant Farmers Union;
WILLARD UPHAUS, executive secretary, Religion and Labor Foundation;
CHARLES C. WEBBER, Methodist Federation for Social Service;
JOHN WOODRUFF, American Federation of Teachers, Texas.
Commonwealth Approaches the Future

BY ROBERT WOOD

COMMONWEALTH College is carrying through its reorganization in response to the deep needs of the southern labor and farm movement.

What are a few of the recent developments that call for the conversion of Commonwealth into a broad and comprehensive training center for labor union organizers?

1. The upsurge in the ranks of the industrial workers throughout the United States made articulate in the emergence and sturdy growth of the Committee for Industrial Organization. Coupled with this the new vigor the C.I.O. movement has imparted to some sections of the American Federation of Labor membership, a vigor already making itself evident in the increased thousands coming into A.F. of L. ranks. To stimulate the more rapid growth of the labor movement, unity on the basis of industrial unionism in the basic industries must be attained at the earliest opportunity.

2. Unification of the agricultural movement through the recent formation of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing House, and Allied Workers of America. The creation of this international, dedicated to the organization and furthering of the best interests of the wage workers in rural America, is a step of far-reaching importance. It is the high road for bringing the rural workers into an unbreakable alliance with the industrial workers in the cities; a most important advance in the united struggle for progress and against reaction and fascism.

3. The movement toward political action by the masses of the American people as a class force. Labor, betrayed time and again, by the reactionary forces in the Republican and Democratic parties, is becoming conscious, in increasing measure, of its potential decisive influence in the political life of our country. It is moving to assure consolidation of its economic gains by mass and independent participation in the political arena.

The workers and farmers are learning the sharp differences between a Minnesota Farmer-Labor governor like Elmer A. Benson and a strike-breaker like Horner of Illinois, a representative of the most reactionary and corrupt wing of the Democratic Party.

Commonwealth College can and must play an advanced role, broadening and extending the traditions that have brought it to the forefront as a progressive factor in the life of the South. Commonwealth must become the training center for hundreds of able organizers who will return to all sections of the South. The Commonwealth-trained organizers must set the pace; must become the future leaders who will aid in making the South a citadel and stronghold of militant trade unionism. This becomes a most urgent task in view of the increasing migration of northern "runaway" industry, which comes South because it believes here it can oppress and exploit workers to a greater extent than in the North.

The southern labor movement must grow and form an integral and important section of the nation's progressive labor and political movement, and toward the success of this growth Commonwealth can contribute immeasurably.

Commonwealth Students Discuss Southern Problems

JACOBS SPEAKS ON TRENDS IN UNION MOVEMENT TODAY

The sixth week of Commonwealth's discussion group series for the 1937 summer term was led by Bob Wood, southern labor organizer, on Special Problems of the South Today. Wood included in his week's discussion a study of the terror exercised against the southern worker in his struggles to organize, of the prevailing conditions among rural workers, the question of the "differential," the unemployed situation, and trade union organization in the South. The problem of the Negro was presented by Wood's wife, Ida, who has been active in the movement toward political action by the masses of the American people as a class force. Labor, betrayed time and again, by the reactionary forces in the Republican and Democratic parties, is becoming conscious, in increasing measure, of its potential decisive influence in the political life of our country. It is moving to assure consolidation of its economic gains by mass and independent participation in the political arena.

The workers and farmers are learning the sharp differences between a Minnesota Farmer-Labor governor like Elmer A. Benson and a strike-breaker like Horner of Illinois, a representative of the most reactionary and corrupt wing of the Democratic Party.

Commonwealth College can and must play an advanced role, broadening and extending the traditions that have brought it to the forefront as a progressive factor in the life of the South. Commonwealth must become the training center for hundreds of able organizers who will return to all sections of the South. The Commonwealth-trained organizers must set the pace; must become the future leaders who will aid in making the South a citadel and stronghold of militant trade unionism. This becomes a most urgent task in view of the increasing migration of northern "runaway" industry, which comes South because it believes here it can oppress and exploit workers to a greater extent than in the North.

The southern labor movement must grow and form an integral and important section of the nation's progressive labor and political movement, and toward the success of this growth Commonwealth can contribute immeasurably.

From page one.

WILLIAMS ACTIVE IN STATE FOR PAST SEVEN YEARS

preacher lost the case—yet won. For the New Era Schools gave him wider opportunity.

The base for the New Era Schools was the Williams home in Little Rock. A small volunteer staff, which always included at least one member of Commonwealth College, carried on a whole bundle of activities. An essential part of the equipment for these was the Williams' car. It was almost continuously on the road. Often it was filled with Negro and white workers being brought into the schools or being taken to some workers' convention or committee meeting.

The Schools conducted militant campaigns for better labor laws, for more and better relief and work relief, for the organization of the unemployed and sharecroppers, for southern workers' civil rights, drawing into these fights liberal and progressive leaders, labor leaders as well as rank and fileers, Negro and white victims of terror. Increasingly they cooperated with such groups as the Arkansas Federation of Labor and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

Claude Williams holds various labor offices which give him an influential voice in the formation of southern labor policies. He is a regional vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers. He is the executive committee of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. Recently, he helped integrate the program of the S. T. F. U. with that of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing House and Allied Workers of America.

He has made occasional trips to the East and North in the interest of workers of the South. On the first of these he carried petitions from 8,000 southern workers asking for more adequate relief and for educational opportunities. He has made contacts in New York, New England, Chicago and other northern cities, as well as in the South, which he is now using in behalf of Commonwealth and its new program.

Claude Williams has suffered political, social, and economic persecution for his labor activities. He has faced mob hysteria, served a jail sentence, has been flogged. This has but added to his zeal. This, he sees, is the way that capitalism behaves when awakening workers challenge its domination. The sequel to which must be a wider awakening, more vigorous workers' action through their labor and defense organizations.