Williams to Speak

At Negro Congress

Elmer Williams, director of Commonwealth, will address the Second National Negro Congress at Philadelphia this week on "The Economic and Political Problems of the South." Williams is a delegate from Commonwealth to the Congress, which has been called in order to give voice to the universal demands of the American Negro population for economic security, the right to work and to belong to a labor union, federal legislation against lynching, education, women's rights, justice for the Scottsboro victims, and united action against fascism and war.

The First National Negro Congress, held in February 1936, resulted in the establishment of a permanent federation of councils which are now functioning in more than seventy cities to the end of eliminating economic, social, and political discrimination against the race. The Second Congress, planned to consolidate and further the work of these groups, is meeting October 15, 16, and 17.

On his way to Philadelphia Williams made two stops. The first was at Attleboro, Ark., where he engaged in organizational work to further the functioning of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in its framework of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America. The second was at Montvale, Tenn., where he visited Highlander Folk School, the only labor training center in the South besides Commonwealth.

College Gives Extension Course at Muskogee

The first extension course that Commonwealth College has ever presented on its sole initiative and responsibility was given last week by Director Claude Williams and several other staff members, who conducted a three-day training course at Muskogee, Oklahoma, for leaders in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

STFU officials, district organizers, and members from the surrounding territory gathered at the Muskogee Trades Alliance headquarters Monday night to hear Williams and Horace Bryan describe the background and struggles of the union, and of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America, with which the STFU has just become affiliated. On Wednesday night a roundtable discussion was held, with Don Kobler, Commonwealth secretary-treasurer, joining the group. Each of the STFU members described his own situation and problems, after which the other participants made suggestions and criticisms.

Plans for a mass meeting on Saturday afternoon were called off because of conflict with the Oklahoma State Fair, but Will Hale, field educator recently added...
Official Denunciation and Terrorism
Fail to Halt CIO Invasion of South

Sharecroppers and Agricultural Workers Affiliate With New International Union at Denver Convention and Begin Drive; Commonwealth Endorsed

BY CLAUDE WILLIAMS

"WE DON'T object to our workers being organized, but keep John L. Lewis and that blank CIO out of here."

—An industrialist speaking recently to a labor leader, referring to the bauxite miners of Arkansas.

"I wouldn't mind my niggers being organized in a decent union, but I don't want nothing to do with that Lewis and his gang."—A cotton planter speaking to a traveling seminar of which I was a member.

"Get out and stay out! If you come back I'll kill you! Writin' me insultin' letters 'cause one of your damn niggers forced me off the road in a ditch!" Deputy E. F. Bunce at Forrest City, Arkansas, September 17, as he and Sheriff Campbell were forcing J. R. Butler, Howard Kester and me into a car and driving us out of town. Butler, a vice-president of the new agricultural international union, CIO organizer and president of the STFU, had just been severely beaten in the courthouse by deputy sheriffs and planter thugs, while court was in session.

"Imported CIO agitators, Communists and highly paid professional organizers are not wanted in Memphis. They will not be tolerated."—Mayor Watkins Overton of Memphis, September 18.

"I am 100 per cent behind Mayor Overton in his attack on the CIO. We will not tolerate these foreign agitators in Memphis.... We will free Memphis of these unwanted people.... We know Norman Smith and his whereabouts..." Police Commissioner Cliff Davis of Memphis, September 20.

"Very soon," on September 21, Norman Smith, UAWA organizer was waylaid and severely beaten in Memphis by thugs.

These prayers for a 'decent union' for southern workers have been fervent and the tactics employed to keep the CIO out of the South have been vicious, but they are 'too late and of no avail.' The CIO is here!

In Denver, Colorado, on July 9-12, various unions among agricultural, cannery and allied workers of the nation were coordinated to form one union, the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America. A strong and representative executive council was elected, with Donald Henderson as its chairman.

The delegates voted to affiliate with the CIO and a charter was immediately granted. Since then a number of regions have held conventions and established their districts in keeping with the policies and constitution of the International.

September 23-26 saw a southern region following suit. At Memphis, District 4, representing 50,000 workers and a potential membership of millions, was set up to include the agricultural and allied workers of Alabama, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Arkansas, states in which cotton plantation workers are most ruthlessly exploited, and in which terrorist practices are prevalent.

Yes, John L. Lewis and his 'CIO gang' are moving in.

This development is to the chagrin of the landed aristocracy, southern industrialists, labor recalcitrants and other diehards. But it is heralded with shouts of welcome and even with amens and hal­helujahs by sharecroppers, tenant farmers, wage hands, and southern workers generally. Negro and white sharecroppers and farm workers know they are new members of a labor union and feel themselves to be a part of the broad labor movement.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the Sharecroppers' Union have been movements—worthy movements of historical importance; movements which have merited the general interest and broad support they have received. They have made the nation 'sharecropper conscious'; forced recognition of plantation misery upon state and federal governments and the setting up of tenancy commissions; they have fought for civil liberties and obtained court convictions for peonage.

Now with the support of the CIO, these organizations attain the full stature of the labor union. Under tried leadership the workers are giving their voices to deal as a labor union to alleviate their miserable economic conditions.

The South is predominantly rural. Agriculture and lumber, therefore, are key industries from the point of view of organizing labor. The textile, garment, and automobile industries cannot attain their full strength until the workers in agriculture and lumber are organized.

They can be effectively organized only on the principal of industrial unionism. The CIO is the logical medium for this drive and it can, with the support of the progressive forces in the AFL, do in fact what was done in theory in '65—abolish slavery and end peonage.

Readers of the FORTNIGHTLY will rejoice to learn that Commonwealth College will continue to support this drive by its resident and extension programs. The first of the field classes was conducted early in October at Muskogee, Oklahoma. Two special resident classes for these agricultural and allied workers will be conducted during our fall and winter quarters.

These activities are supported by the unanimous adoption of the following resolution:

Whereas, Commonwealth College has reorganized its program to serve the educational needs of the southern agricultural workers,

be it resolved, that this convention of District 4 of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America endorse the program of Commonwealth College and support its work.

The international body at Denver and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union have also endorsed Commonwealth's new program.

Dramatics Teacher Asks Copies of Play Scripts

An appeal to friends of Commonwealth for copies of play scripts is being made by Lee Hays, teacher of dramatics at the college.

The drama library is fairly extensive, according to Hays, but since the purpose of his course is to study as many plays as possible and apply the knowledge thus gained in the composition of originals, it is necessary that a large number of additional scripts be secured.

Anyone possessing available copies of labor or social-protest plays or scripts is urged to send them to Hays at Commonwealth College, Meno, Ark.

JEEMS ADAMS RETURNS TO PRINT FORTNIGHTLY

Commonwealth's request for a new printer to set type and run off the FORTNIGHTLY, broadcast last month upon the departure of Norman Law, has been answered by the arrival of Jeems Adams from Big Laurel, Va.

Adams is no stranger to Commonwealth, having been a student here during the first two quarters of 1936. Upon his arrival he went at once to the printshop, called all the type face by his first names, and plunged into the job of getting out the present issue of the FORTNIGHTLY.
Emphasis on Labor Problems of South
Indicated at Beginning of Quarter

Lecture Series by Bryan, Sanford, and Williams is Opening Program Feature

The opening program for the fall quarter at Commonwealth was marked by special emphasis on the labor history and the industrial and agricultural background of the South. A series of talks by Horace Bryan, Marvin Sanford, and Director Claude Williams provided for the students a general introduction to the actual class work which began on Oct. 8.

Bryan's discussion, which opened the series, took up the recent developments in the American labor movement which culminated in the establishment of the CIO and the great drive to organize the unorganized. This drive took cognizance of the imperative need to organize southern labor by setting up the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee and supporting numerous other unions in a comprehensive effort to control industrial and agricultural workers.

Sanford followed Bryan's general background lecture with an outline of the industrial situation of the South, pointing out that the tremendous industrial progress in recent years had taken place solely as a result of the availability of cheap labor. Using textiles, rayon, and steel as examples, he showed that the migration of northern industries had been due to the desire of the manufacturers to find a labor supply that would work long hours for small wages and be immune to the wiles of "subversive union agitators." Sanford also sketched the history of the southern labor movement, calling attention to the rich tradition of under-cover organization and resistance to exploitation that had characterized the miners, the lumber workers, and other groups.

By contrast, Williams' address dealt with the agricultural problems of the South, particularly as they arose through the employment and virtual enslavement of Negro workers, who, as he said, "any good Southerner can shoot down without leaving a blot on his conscience." Using his personal experiences to add color, Williams sketched a vivid picture of the conditions by which the former slaves had been turned into peons, serving absentee landlords, and how the racial issue has been used to prevent the establishment of unity between black and white workers.

Analysis of Courses Shows
Stress on Practical Training
For Southern Union Work

A study of the courses being presented during the current quarter at Commonwealth makes it apparent that the students attending this term are receiving a thorough grounding in the theory and techniques of the labor movement, with special emphasis being laid on conditions in the South.

A five-hour course in Labor Unionism has been made compulsory for all students, and all other classes have been planned as developments and expansions of this basic study. Along with social theory and labor background, the subject includes such practical matters as instructions in conducting a union meeting, organizing unorganized groups, studying the laws of union constitutions and by-laws, raising funds and bookkeeping, negotiating a contract, and conducting a strike.

The course in Labor Journalism teaches students how to draw up a union leaflet and edit a shop paper, how to write labor news for both the labor press and the daily papers, and how to conduct publicity campaigns.

In the classes on the History of the Labor Movement special attention is being paid to labor struggles in the South and practical lessons are being drawn from the history of these struggles so that students may apply them to current developments. The course indicates the part played by both craft and industrial unions and indicates the culmination today of the forces behind each. A study of labor's role in American politics is included, along with a survey of the attitude of the courts toward union organization and struggle.

The subject matter of the lessons on Imperialism and Fascism is the United States as a world power—the economic development of the country, the place of its monopoly groups in world competition for markets, resources, and investment opportunities, its dealings with small countries and its conflicts in the Pacific; then fascism and its relation to imperialism, fascist development in the United States, and the responsibility of farmers, workers, and progressives to oppose imperialism and fascism.

The course in Workers' Dramatics is attempting to familiarize its students with stage technique as an agency for presenting labor's viewpoint in dramatic form. Socially important plays and union skits are being studied, and each member of the class will be expected to write a skit embodying part of his own union experience. A collective labor play, to be written by the entire group, is also scheduled.

The Public Speaking class includes a study of parliamentary law, essential for all workers in the labor movement. The practice speeches are to be tied in closely with the other courses, using material of practical value.

Supplementary courses in typing, mimeograph technique, farm problems, and cooperatives will be offered during the quarter in order that students desiring to equip themselves with special training in these directions.
Jacobs Takes Guild Job; Winkler Replaces Him

The imperative demand of the American Newspaper Guild for organizers of ability and experience has necessitated a last-minute change in the Commonwealth faculty, with Douglas Jacobs relinquishing the instructorship in Labor Journalism to become a full-time organizer for the Guild. Jacobs is being replaced by Jean Winkler.

Jacobs, who had frequently served as a Guild worker, has been temporarily assigned to the New York headquarters of the newspaper organization. Later he expects to be transferred to field work among newspapermen, probably in the South, where the Guild is weakest and where the opposition of the publishers is most insistent. The Guild's new program of industrial expansion to include all organized newspaper workers, a consequence of its recent affiliation with the CIO, has quadrupled its potential membership, and ten new national organizers, of whom Jacobs is one, are being drafted for the job.

Winkler, like Jacobs a St. Louisan, was associated with the latter in the establishment of a St. Louis edition of People's Press last spring. He was assistant Missouri supervisor of the Federal Writers Project until discharged for joining in a strike of the project employees, has served as associate editor of the Anvil, a workers' fiction magazine, and has a background of newspaper experience. He was publicity director for the United Electrical & Radio Workers during the spectacular Emerson and Century strikes last April and May, and has also done publicity work for the International Cleaners and Dye House Workers, the Workers Alliance, and the St. Louis Tenants' League.

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Workers, who have spent the last fifteen years of his life in the metal mines of Idaho, Montana, and Arizona, The other is a 22-year-old girl, the daughter of a West Virginia coal miner, who has already made major appearances on public platforms to explain conditions in the coal mines and the importance of labor organization.

Labor unions represented among the new registrants, in addition to those already mentioned, include the United Auto Workers, the American Federation of Teachers, the United Retail Clerks, the Painters' Union, the Farmers' Union, the United Office and Professional Workers' Union, and the Association of Hospital and Medical Professionals. Several of the newcomers have had college training and have done work in adult education.

Labor Unions Aid College Activities

The importance of Commonwealth's role as an educational center for the labor movement in the South has been recognized during recent weeks in a variety of endorsements by union groups.

The American Federation of Teachers, holding its national convention at Madison, Wis., last August, took cognizance of its responsibility to workers' education by voting donations of $250 each to Commonwealth and to Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tenn.

Approval of Commonwealth's program was voted by the international convention of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America at Denver, and also by the District 4 convention of the same union at Memphis. Similar endorsement was made by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union executive council meeting at Hillhouse, Miss.

A number of nationally prominent labor leaders have permitted their names to be placed in nomination for non-resident membership in the Commonwealth Association, the college governing body. The Association election will take place in the near future.

Valuable Books Given Commonwealth Library

Commonwealth College's library was unexpectedly enriched by 183 volumes, most of them valuable social and economic studies, when the Methodist Federation for Social Service in New York decided last month to disband its circulating library and offered Commonwealth its choice of the volumes.

Outstanding among the items chosen by Henry Black, college librarian, is the stenographic report of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial at Dedham, Mass., in two volumes, edited by Elihu Root and other leading lawyers who were anxious that a complete record of this historic legal battle be available for posterity. Another interesting book in the collection is Katherine Lumpkin's and Dorothy Douglas' "Child Workers in America," which was the object of wide interest when it was published last spring. Other social investigations, a variety of economic reports, and various moral and religious interpretations are also included.

The Federation has had frequent contact with Commonwealth through Winifred Chappell of the college faculty, who served as its co-secretary, along with Dr. Harry F. Ward, before coming here. It was Miss Chappell's presence at Commonwealth which suggested the gift.

William Buttrick Comes As Teacher of Economics

The need of a full-time course in Economics so that Commonwealth students may have a clear understanding of the base motivations of society has resulted in the arrival of William Buttrick of Asheville, N. C., to direct such a class. Buttrick will also take over Horace Bryan's course in Union Methods whenever Bryan is away on field trips for organizational purposes.

Born in Asheville, Buttrick was educated at the city college there and at Duke University. In 1935 he took the FERA training courses in workers' education that were held in connection with the Southern Summer School, and the following year he served as an assistant instructor in economics at the Summer School. Last winter he was at Brookwood Labor College at Katonah, New York, leaving in March to become a teacher of social science at various campuses in Pennsylvania that the National Youth Administration set up for underprivileged women workers. He is a member of the American Federation of Teachers.

MARGARET MUSSelman Joins Library Staff

A recent addition to the Commonwealth staff is Margaret Musselman of Dallas, Texas, who is serving as assistant librarian under Henry Black. Miss Musselman came to Commonwealth from Highlander Folk School, where she had been doing secretarial work last summer. A graduate of Southern Methodist University at Dallas, Miss Musselman continued her studies in sociology and case work at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University, St. Louis. Thence she went to the Highlander extension school sponsored by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers at La Follette, Tennessee. Here she was librarian, editor of a paper, "The Shift Tail," and supervisor of a union label fair which became noted throughout the South for introducing a tobacco-splitting contest. Her background also includes executive work with the League for Industrial Democracy in Dallas.

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to the college staff, remained in Muskogee to continue contact with the group, and it is expected that a field trip will be made by members of the Commonwealth faculty and student body in the near future for the purpose of resuming the discussions.

Muskogee, 120 miles from Mena, is the largest large town in the neighborhood of Commonwealth next to Fort Smith, and the administration is planning to make it a center for extension work.