

EXCLUSION OF ALL ASIATICS IS SLOGAN OF ORGANIZED LABOR

Western Immigration Conference Goes on Record as Opposed to Free Admission of Orientals.

PROSPECTIVE EUROPEAN INFLUX GREAT MENACE

Recommendation That Illiteracy Test and Increased Per Capita Tax Laws Be Urged in Congress.

By K. B. SMITH.

IMMIGRATION, its effect upon the present labor situation in the United States and the nature of legislation necessary to restrict it, as well as the best method of bringing such legislation about, is a problem that will take up no small part of the deliberations at the A. F. of L. convention during its coming session. The problem of immigration, as well as recommendations concerning it, will be put before the convention in a concrete form as a result of the deliberations of the Western Labor Immigration Conference which adjourned sine die last evening after a two days' session in the Labor Temple.

One of the important steps of the conference was taken a few moments before its adjournment, when upon motion of Paul Scharrenberg, of the California State Federation of Labor, the conference went on record as unanimously favoring the extension of the Chinese exclusion act so as to include the exclusion of Japanese, Koreans, Hindus and, in fact, all Asiatic peoples.

During the session of the conference stirring addresses were made by the delegates, most of whom are from states of the Pacific Coast, in which every argument favoring the restriction of immigration from Southern Europe, as well as the Orient, was advanced.

The keynote of the anti-immigration sentiment seems to rest upon the "illiteracy test" and the increased per capita tax and both of these propositions the conference went on record as favoring. At the session yesterday afternoon a resolution was adopted favoring the enactment of a law requiring an alien to be able to read and write his own language before being eligible to admission to the United States.

Changes in Immigration.

The undesirability of unrestricted immigration was brought out in addresses by Charles Perry Taylor, secretary of the conference; Paul Scharrenberg, of California; E. P. Marsh, of the Washington Federation of Labor; Frank Morrison, secretary of the A. F. of L.; Olaf Tveitmo, of California, and a score of other speakers.

Mr. Taylor pointed out that from the close of the Civil War until 1882, immigration to the United States came principally from Great Britain, Ireland, Scotland, the Scandinavian countries, Germany and Holland and that the character of that immigration was high and easily assimilable. Later, when the great manufacturing industries were firmly established, the demand for cheap and unskilled labor increased and then started the influx of aliens from the south of Europe which has continued to the present time and which forms a constantly growing menace to workmen already in the country and to organized labor, as it is hard to organize aliens of twenty or more different tongues.

Statistics were quoted showing that in the state of New York alone, forty-seven per cent of the patients in insane asylums are of foreign birth and that during a recent year, the prison population of New York consisted of 1,830 natives of that state, 878 natives of other states, 521 naturalized citizens and 1091 unnaturalized aliens.

Other speakers urged the improvement of living conditions abroad, thereby satisfying men with life in their native lands, as the only real solution of the immigration problem. Removal of excessive taxes on farming property in this country was also urged as a means of caring for many of those who are already residents.

Legislation Asked.

The A. F. of L. is already back of a bill asking for an increased per capita tax as well as the "illiteracy test" requirement. This bill was passed recently by the Senate and House and was vetoed by President Taft. The conference favored the presentation of the bill in practically the same form to the next session of Congress, believing it would be passed under the new administration.

The fight in the conference yesterday was on the question of whether or not the Western Labor Immigration conference should effect a permanent organization to work in conjunction with the A. F. of L. for the enactment of desirable immigration laws or should merely make recommendations to the A. F. of L. convention for its guidance and action. After hours of debate the latter course was decided upon, although a motion was made and adopted to the effect that the officers of the conference keep their movement alive by taking up their deliberations and recommendations with the annual conventions of state federations shortly to meet in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia.

A resolution was presented by the representative of the Mine Workers of Carbonado, Washington, urging laboring men to form an industrial organization instead of craft organizations to oppose the present system of immigration and also providing for an interchange of union cards. These matters were eliminated by the resolutions committee, but that portion of the resolution asking for the appointment of a press agent or correspondent to keep European labor papers and other periodicals informed as to the true labor conditions on the Pacific Coast and thereby stem the tide of immigration, was adopted and such action by the A. F. of L. will be recommended.

Changes Recommended.

A summary of the recommendations to be made to the A. F. of L. through resolutions adopted by the immigration conference follows:

That Congress be urged to make appropriations for the construction of proper immigration stations, as well as appropriations to properly handle the increase immigration to the Pacific Coast which will result from the opening of the Panama Canal. Appropriations to properly enforce existing immigration laws are also urged.

That an alien be required to be able to read and write his own language before he is eligible to enter the United States.

That the per capita tax be increased, as provided for in the bill fostered by the A. F. of L.

That owing to the tide of immigration and the ever increasing use of mechanical appliances by which products are increased, workers be advised of the desirability of shortening the working day.

That the A. F. of L. at its coming convention reiterate its demand for needed immigration legislation and direct its national officials and executive committee to aggressively press the enactment of such legislation at the next session of Congress.

A small war broke out in the conference yesterday afternoon upon the presentation of a resolution urging legislation requiring foreigners to be

(Continued on Page Twenty-four.)

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(Continued From Page Nineteen.)

come American citizens within five years after their arrival in this country. Substitute amendment was offered calling for a declaration of intention of becoming a citizen instead of actually becoming one. Both the resolution and the amendment were defeated, the conference leaving the matter to the action of the A. F. of L. convention.
