

Woll Softens the Nicaragua Resolution

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WASHINGTON, D. C., (By Mail).—Not even the slaughter of 300 Nicaraguans by the United States marines could shake the complacent calm of the American Federation of Labor leaders under whose domination the fifth convention of the so-called Pan-American Federation of Labor has been holding brief sessions here off and on for the past three days, carefully refraining from action of any kind.

The resolution of protest introduced by Salomon de la Selva of Nicaragua, with the fiery warning that "if the marines do not depart from Nicaragua soon they will have to kill all of us," has been buried in the resolutions committee, of which Matthew Woll is chairman.

No action has yet been taken, or even formally proposed, in connection with the cabled news that the Panaman and Haitian delegations were arrested as they were about to embark for the United States. Inasmuch as Haiti is directly under marine rule this is an "embarrassing question" for American imperialism and its apologists.

Today, lest one of the 20 Latin-American delegates—most, but not all, of whom are handpicked by the American Federation of Labor bureaucracy—might be so inconsiderate as to resuscitate the Nicaraguan issue, all sessions are called off while the delegates are being entertained on a personally conducted visit to Mt. Vernon.

De la Selva's resolution on Nicaragua declared that: "Intervention of the United States is creative of a state of mind not conducive to friendship and good will towards the United States and the American people, who are in no way responsible for the incident."

Call For Emphatic Protest.

"Be it resolved," said the resolution, "by the fifth congress of the Pan-American Federation of Labor to register a most emphatic protest against the presence and activities of the United States marine corps in Nicaragua and against any interference on the part of the United States Government in the domestic affairs of the Nicaraguan people."

"Resolved, that this resolution be transmitted by telegraph to the President of the United States of America at his summer residence with the urgent request that the United States forces be withdrawn from Nicaragua immediately, in accordance with the letter and spirit of this resolution."

The Nicaraguan delegate had a hard time reading his resolution at all, due to pseudo-parliamentary objections by President William Green. Finally he was allowed to present it in open session yesterday morning. He did so, moving its immediate adoption. Delegate Frank Morrison of the American Federation of Labor promptly rose and said: "Why that has to go to the resolutions committee!"

Martinez Seeks Prompt Protest.

At this point Ricardo Martinez of the Venezuelan Labor Union asked for the floor. There was some hesitation about giving it to him, but he succeeded in saying:

"In view of the enormity and immediacy of the matter dealt with in

Dead in Nicaragua



Private Michael Oblarski of Roulette, Pa., U. S. marine corps, killed at Ocotal, Nicaragua, when United States marines and constabulary seized and fortified the town in the course of their campaign against Nicaraguan independence.

this resolution, in view of the urgent necessity of putting a stop to the crimes which the armed intervention of the United States is committing in Nicaragua, I believe that this convention of the Pan-American Federation of Labor cannot do less than register its prompt protest. We must act not tomorrow but today. Let us suspend the rules, and adopt this resolution now. It should be done unanimously."

But the rules prevailed. Green, who was in the chair, looked a little annoyed, pounded on the table with his gavel and stated tersely that there would be no further discussion on the matter until the resolutions committee brought in its report.

At the first meeting of the resolutions committee it was plain that the resolution will not be allowed to go thru in its original form. Woll insisted that some changes would have to be made, "in deference to the feelings of a good many people in the United States," he was supported by Luis N. Morones, head of the Mexican delegation. A tussle of three hours ensued in the committee, at the conclusion of which a sub-committee completely controlled by Woll and Morones was entrusted with the task of drawing up a substitute for the original resolution.

The attitude of the American Federation of Labor delegation (consisting of Green, Woll, Morrison and Noonan of the electricians) toward concrete manifestations of American imperialism, is all the more glaring because it follows close upon the abstract stand for self-determination of peoples contained in President Green's welcoming remarks to the delegates at the opening session of the convention. The speech, while carefully avoiding any direct criticism of the United States government, nevertheless did try to make an approach to Latin-American sentiment in a way which contrasted sharply with the keynote addresses of Samuel Gompers at previous conventions of the Pan-American Federation of Labor.

Before the opening of the convention there was much speculation among the visitors as to what the attitude of the Mexican delegations would be. Green stabbed the Mexican labor movement in the back during the recent conflict with the Catholic reaction in Mexico, which was intimately connected with the struggle with American imperialism over Mexico's oil and land laws and which threatened all the conquests of the Mexican revolution. At the height of the Catholic rebellion, the Mexican Confederation of Labor (C. R. O. M.) appealed for support to the Pan-American Federation of Labor. Green did not even make this appeal public, and when it was sent out to the newspapers from Mexico, he answered with an ambiguous statement championing "religious liberty" and declaring that in any case the struggle of the Mexican workers was a "purely domestic affair" in which he could not intervene.

Because of the indignation caused by Green's attitude among the workers of Mexico, because of the recognition of Sacosa by the Mexican gov-

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BRIGADIER-GEN. LOGAN FELAND (above), is in command of the American marines in Nicaragua, scene of demonstrations by revolutionists.

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movement, of which delegate Morones is an important cabinet member, and because of the general sympathy of Mexicans for Nicaragua and the other victims of American Imperialism, it was thought by some that the C. R. O. M. delegates here might have to make at least some show of resistance to the American Federation of Labor policies at this convention. Others, more familiar with the internal politics of the Pan-American Federation of Labor, foretold that the C. R. O. M. delegates would outdo themselves "trying to reestablish their place firmly in the good graces of Green and his associates of the American Federation of Labor executive council. This has proved to be the case. From Morones' speech in reply to Green's greeting on the opening day, and from his attitude in the resolutions committee, it is already plain that the Mexican Delegation and the American Federation of Labor bureaucrats will present a solid front on all major questions.

Morones' opening-day speech was far more reactionary than Green's, which at least played with Marxistian phrases. It did not contain a single progressive sentence. It did not mention Russia's differences with the United States government and with the American oil, mining and financial magnates. It was one long harangue against "the Reds." The pervasion was a poem of praise for

the American Federation of Labor and for American Federation of Labor methods.

Aside from the C. R. O. M. of Mexico and the Pan Federation of Workers of Porto Rico (which is not an independent body but an affiliated section of the American Federation of Labor), there are no national Latin-American labor federations of any importance represented here. Delegates are present from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, Cuba and Santo Domingo. In most cases they represent paper organizations which have no real existence. Few of them have spoken aloud in the convention thus far. Their chief activity has been to den themselves vigorously during the tedious reading of the officers' report,—which by the way, consisted almost exclusively of letters exchange between William Green, the President of the United States and other important personages, with incidental attacks against the Communists, the larger labor federations of South America and the All-American Anti-Imperialist League.

Nevertheless, the three-hour battle in the resolutions committee indicates that not all the Latin-Americans are content to play the role of "yes men" which has been cut out for them. With the terrible impact of the Nicaraguans events, we are likely to see some fighting before this convention closes.