

# Ben Stolberg 'Progressive' Misleader, Is Exposed

By GEORGE PADMORE.

I was not surprised to read the name of Benjamin Stolberg in the "New York Times," (official organ of the Wall Street bankers), of Sunday, June 9, 1929, as one of the petty bourgeois liberals who indorsed the recently organized Conference for Progressive Labor Action. What Stolberg said about the A. F. of L. as a strike-breaker is quite true, but he is hardly any better than the bureaucratic misleaders, Bill Green and Matthew Woll. They are all a bunch of capitalist lickspittles and opportunist lackeys.

Stolberg differs from Green and Woll merely in style. He is more cunning and deceptive as a phrasemonger, and in this way appears to be more "left" than his trade union brothers. But when all is said and done, they are birds of the same feather and must be fought ruthlessly by real revolutionary leaders of the working class.

It might be asked what justifies our taking this sharp stand against this so-called progressive?

I shall relate an incident which took place some months ago at Howard University, Washington, D. C., the largest Negro college in the United States. Small as the incident was in itself, it nevertheless has important political implications especially at this time when the treacherous Muste, to which gang Stolberg belongs is laying the basis for action which means another attempt to deceive and corrupt the American workers. Because of the necessity to expose these "Progressive" hypocrites at once, I want to let the workers know to what type Stolberg belongs.

While Stolberg was lecturing at the university, he was asked to answer certain questions. A man by the name of M. Nurse took the floor and after pointing out the strong points and weaknesses in Stolberg's address invited him to express an opinion on the political future of the Negroes. Nurse suggested that since 95 per cent of the Negroes in America were within the ranks of the working class, it was to their interest to identify themselves with, and support the only working class party—the Communist, and not to vote for the republicans, democrats, or socialists, who were the capitalist political representatives. When Stolberg heard this militant statement from a student in a group whom he thought were all politically backward, he became indignant and immediately got up from his seat and attempted to reply. Instead of facing the issue he became abusive and called Nurse a "Red" and "Communist." Nurse at once retorted that abuse and libels would not help him out of the difficulty; what the students demanded was a showdown on the very basis of the assertion that Stolberg himself had made, "that Negroes were largely members of the working class." Despite every effort to get Stolberg to answer the question put, he refused to commit himself, but began to abuse the Communist Party, saying that the leaders were all a bunch of crooks and good-for-nothings, etc. Nurse, who by that time had won the entire sympathy of the students for the

militant stand he took, told Stolberg that he as a Negro was always prepared to follow the leadership of the Communist Party rather than a renegade like Stolberg. Immediately after this incident, a young professor by the name of Ralph Bunche, who teaches Political Science, attempted to get Stolberg to say something about the last presidential election and the Negroes' vote. Stolberg's reply was: "The Negroes should leave the republican and democratic parties and turn to the third party—Progressive, which he was attempting to organize along with other "progressives" like A. J. Muste, O'Neal, Victor Berger, Norman Thomas, etc., etc. That although plans were under way to call a conference (which has since been called) he did not believe that the effort of organizing a "third party" in America would ever meet with much success." (bold face mine—G. P.)

This statement, publicly expressed before the students at Howard University shows the defeatist attitude of this man who today poses as the new leader of the American workers. Stolberg might not have been conscious of the amount of truth contained in his statement. A third party under the leadership of a bunch of petty-bourgeois-opportunist-liberals will always be doomed to failure, because no class-conscious worker would ever surrender his political hopes and aspirations to such a coterie of rank renegades as the present leaders of the Progressive Labor group.

## New Leadership Among Negroes.

The working-class students at Howard who heard Stolberg will never forget his evasive answer to the challenging question put to him by the militant youth, Nurse; and among this group will be many who will continue to expose these fake "progressives" as Nurse did to Stolberg, the petty-bourgeois liberal, whose only interest in addressing Negro students was to fleece them of \$75 for an hour or two of bunk. Stolberg by his acceptance of \$75 from poor students shows that he is one of the worst degenerate intellectual prostitutes masquerading as a "friend" of the working class in America.

Let me say to Mr. Stolberg, that as a worker and a member of the most oppressed and exploited racial minority, that we Negroes, have had enough misleaders both white and black. That the time has come for the Negro workers to take the leadership into their own hands, for the scheme of so-called Conference for Progressive Labor Action of which Stolberg is a part, is nothing else but another attempt to mislead the Negro and white workers with a lot of empty phrases about "militancy" and "independent" political action.

We, the workers, will never again permit ourselves to be misled by hypocritical lackeys of the capitalists like Benjamin Stolberg and his henchmen. We have had enough of the Greens, the Wolls, the Norman Thomases, the Mustes, etc. We will continue to rally to the only genuine revolutionary party of the working class, the Communist Party of America.