

before the convention by the Ohio State Federation of Labor and the Cleveland Federation of Labor reciting that: "The investigation of such emigration and importation of negroes in the State of Ohio had demonstrated to the satisfaction of labor leaders in that State that they were being brought north for the purpose of filling the places of union men demanding better conditions, as in the case of freight handlers." Believing that "the conditions that prevailed in Ohio might apply in all northern States," the president and Executive Council of the Federation were instructed to begin a movement looking towards the organization of negroes in the southern States."<sup>1</sup>

At the 1917 convention of the American Federation of Labor held at Buffalo, New York, the question of negro labor was again considered. It was observed that the colored laborers and helpers throughout the southeastern district were not as familiar with the labor movement as they should be, especially upon the different railroads of the southeastern territory; and that there were fifteen different railroads in the district for which there were only four colored locals. Feeling that a negro organizer, because of his racial and social relations among his people, could accomplish much in organizing the forces into unions, the National Convention appointed a negro railroad man as organizer for the territory as above mentioned. Another set of resolutions, relating to the general condition of negroes in the United States, making suggestions to secure the cooperation of the American people and the national government in an endeavor to have the nations participating in the coming world peace conference agree upon a plan to turn over the African continent or parts thereof to the African race and those descendants of said race who live in America and desire to return to Africa, and thus enable the black race to work out its own destiny on an equality with other peoples of the earth, was referred to a committee. The report was, "Your committee can not be responsible for and rejects the statements contained in the resolution, but, inasmuch as por-

<sup>1</sup> Report of Proceedings, American Federation of Labor, annual session, 1916.