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EDITORIAL—

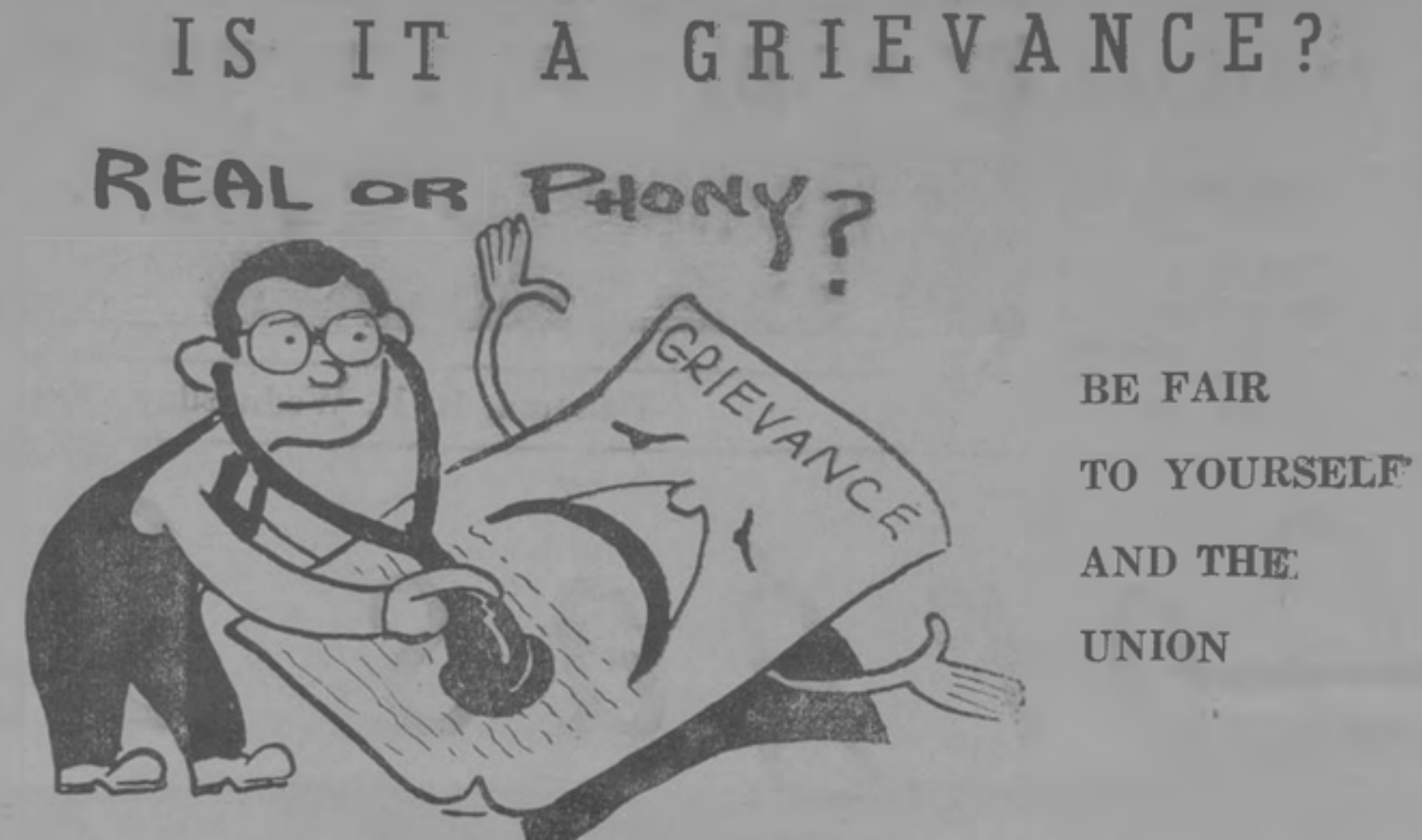
The November 1, 1946 copy of the PANAMA AMERICAN carried an article written by Ralph de Toledano titled "Stalin's Hand in Panama Canal." No one denies that this is a very serious charge.

In the text of the article, Mr. Toledano implied that the top-level officials of the United Public Workers of America, C.I.O. were or are communistic. From the general reaction of the members here, it is apparent that they are confident the officers involved will take care of themselves. Besides this feeling of confidence, the members seem a bit irked. They seem irked because, from an over-all point of view, the charges seem to include them too. Remember, they are not worried. There is no doubt in their minds about where their loyalty lay. They sincerely believe in a democratic form of government. They know this, and the Panama Canal authorities know this. They are irked because now, of all times, when it seems as though they have begun to move toward a better economic standard of living, this ugly thing should rear its head and stand in the path of their progress. Who is responsible for this thing? Why are they doing it?

The author asks why the new union should include "such diverse groups as teachers, hotel and restaurant workers, locomotive engineers, nurses, doctors, power plant workers, truck drivers, painters, machinists, streetcleaners, sales girls, bookkeepers". Although all of these categories are not represented among the workers of the new union, the answer is the same: they are all United States government employees. It is that simple.

When he said that the justified economic grievances of the workers were due to the high cost of living, he could have included as a possible cause, the low wages of these workers. This is perhaps the most important reason in their minds.

These workers have no designs nor plans of a political nature that may affect the security of the Panama Canal. This should be obvious to any investigator who probes that far. It would seem then, that since "top government officials have expressed their anxiety over this development" a thorough and honest investigation be made and a just and fair remedial program originated.



BE FAIR
TO YOURSELF
AND THE
UNION

When is a grievance not a grievance? This question has bothered shop stewards and union officials since our local was chartered.

Perhaps a worker complains about unfair distribution of work, while the facts show him to be mistaken. Or else he may feel entitled to promotion, although the seniority rating list of his outfit proves him wrong. If the worker was mistaken in his facts or attitude, it is better to discover this than to have the management correct us.

Also, don't forget that good union money spent on a poor case comes out of the members' pockets. If a case hasn't a chance but time is spent on it, the men may have to dig down just the same.

When a complaint is not justified, there is double danger in trying to make a grievance out of it: The workers are led to expect impossible results, and the management or administration gets a chance to attack the union. The union's

position is then damaged both with its membership and with management.

A worker should be given the benefit of the doubt on borderline cases. In doubtful cases, where it is felt the worker is largely right, be frank. Tell him we aren't sure of the answer. Then get help from the chief steward, chapter chairman or chairman of the grievance committee in taking up the case through the grievance procedure, to get a definite ruling.

Don't go out on a limb, promising a victory you're not sure of. Rash promises often loomerang, labelling the promiser unreliable.

Sift complaints into "reasonable" and "unreasonable" by asking yourself these questions:

- 1. Has the worker's right been violated?
2. Has the administration acted unfairly?

When the answers are "Yes," you have a real grievance. When it is "No," the steward

should not be afraid to tell the worker so. Take time to explain why. Most of us are reasonable beings, and want to be treated as such. Saving hard feelings is worth a few minutes' time.

All trouble arising in the shop are not matters for grievance machinery. For example, personal differences between employees are not grievances and should not be carried to the foreman by the steward. If the differences are likely to cause trouble in the organization, they may be adjusted through discussion among those involved, in the union hall.

Don't be ruled by personal likes or dislikes or by petty jealousies. If emotion is allowed to govern our decisions, we shall make enemies and lose the confidence of the group. Don't let union politics influence your work. The worker who voted against you has just as much right to your services as one who voted for you.

ENCOURAGING GRIEVANCE REPORTS

In what seems to be a commendable gesture, certain "gold" supervisors have cooperated 100% with union representatives to find the solutions to grievances presented within the last month.

Junior CIO

By HUGH ADAMS

There isn't a place on the Canal Zone where colored and "gold" people go to that we don't hear the words "gold" and "silver". If a newcomer came to the Canal Zone from any foreign country, when he hears the words "gold" and "silver" it makes him think of two metals. But to an American residing on the Canal Zone, it means an unbalanced amount of facilities.

In an issue of the "Pittsburgh Journal" it is said that the screen actor Orson Welles said, "The hate for races if had us a crime and also a contagious disease." In an issue of the monthly magazine EBO NY, fighter Joe Louis gives a proper description of his view on the situation of racial discrimination. The fable or wise saying "All men of the human race are created equal regardless of race, color, creed, or original descent" is practically ignored by the "gold" people. Can we get equality? Let's try.

There is the case of Miss Bernice Dingwall, an employee of the Balboa Clubhouse who was given a 5-day suspension for leaving her post of duty ten minutes before quitting time. Returning to work after the five days, Miss Dingwall was informed by her immediate supervisor, Mrs. Bailey, that she was terminated.

A meeting was arranged between the management and union representative and the case investigated. Thanks to the co-operative attitudes of all the parties involved, the case was settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. Miss Dingwall was penalized the five days without pay for the offense she admitted committing. The termination penalty was lifted.

There is the case of Mrs. Geneva Titus, an employee of the Balboa Clubhouse who was terminated from the service for being discourteous to customers and indifferent to duty. Mrs. Titus was charged with leaving her post for too long a period while customers were forced to wait. Again management and union representatives met to investigate. It was found that Mrs. Titus was absent from her post a long time.

It was also found that the delay was due not to indifference but to additional work to be done in the kitchen by Mrs. Titus.

The personal file of Mrs. Titus was consulted. Her records showed that the only offenses listed against her were a few cases of tardiness and in every case, the time was made up. Again the management and union representatives settled the case to the satisfaction of all concerned.

In the course of screening grievances, the union organizers have found it necessary to throw certain cases out because the evidence presented was not true. Every union member should help the Grievance Committee by presenting only bona fide grievances and then the shop steward should solve grievances in the initial stage.

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