

UPW RESOLUTION.....

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bers.

"We in this country, Mr. President, have been very much unaware of the problems of our brothers in the Canal Zone. These people are engaged in the important work of maintaining and servicing the Canal's locks, through which the ships of the United States and other countries pass. Since the United States government in the operation of the Canal Zone maintains every phase of activity and service, these people are therefore engaged in carpentry, painting, table-waiting, store-keeping, medical aid, teaching; and nearly every occupation that we engage in the United States is carried on by the workers in the Zone. The one marked difference is that their pay is much lower than we receive here for similar employment or that U.S. citizens in the Zone receive for similar work.

"Besides this lower pay, they are plagued by a system of discrimination which is a blight on the policies of the United States Government. The greatest perpetuator of discriminatory policies is the AFL Metal Trades Council, who insist throughout their organization in maintaining Jim Crowism in the Panama Canal Zone.

"These people who have been loyal to the United States since its advents in the Canal, have

worked hard during the war and to no small degree are responsible for having aided and accelerated victory for the Allies, earn in a very large number of cases between fifteen and twenty-five cents per hour, live in poor houses, and have a minimum of educational facilities. These people are now looking to the CIO to better their conditions, and they are sure, Mr. President, and I am sure, that the CIO will not let them down.

"The research department of our union will very soon come forth with an accurate account of the living conditions of these people; and our legal department is preparing legislation to be introduced to the 80th Congress that will give these people higher pay and better pensions.

"By passing this resolution which is now before the delegates to this Eighth Constitutional Convention of the CIO, we pledge our support to alleviate the conditions of these people, and especially to support legislation which we will introduce. I do not desire to take up more time of this Convention, and therefore, in the near future, we will circularize all international unions and councils, acquainting them more fully with the problems, and meanwhile we ask your unanimous support of this resolution."

After Weinstein concluded his remarks, the following resolutions was adopted unanimously as the formal policy of the Congress of Industrial Organizations with respect to the Panama Canal Zone workers:

RESOLUTION ON THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE

Introduced at the Eighth Constitutional Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations By

The United Public Workers of America

WHEREAS, Recently 17,000 so-called "silver workers" of the Panama Canal Zone have organized with the United Public Workers of America, CIO, and

WHEREAS, These people have suffered from the most discriminatory practices, and

WHEREAS, The average wage among these people is \$13 per week with the cost of living comparable to that in the United States, and in some cases higher;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the CIO in Convention assembled wholeheartedly support these workers and calls on the authorities of the Canal Zone to eliminate discriminatory practices and allow equality of job opportunities for all workers of the Canal Zone, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the CIO pledges to support legislation to establish a 40-cent minimum wage together with actuarially just and sound pensions for the workers of the Canal Zone.

ARROWS IN THE AIR

By NELSON MC. BEAN

At this time of the year, we like the rest of the world, are prone to take stock of ourselves; that is, we usually run up a sort of mental assay in an effort to "see" what we have accomplished as the year draws toward its close.

This year, however, we are under the impression that the changes manifest in our community are so grandiose, so colossal that our picayune affairs pale into insignificance beside them. We have seen a dream come true—the dream of Trade Unionism on the Canal Zone—and we find it difficult to restrain an impulse to laugh at the evident discomfiture of the enemies of the Americanism of Lincoln the Emancipator. It is our desire, however, to catalog some gains. We believe that this is an opportune moment to discuss these things.

We recognize the arrival of the Grievance Procedure, (Circular G-341) as a new departure in Panama Canal — "Silver" employee relationship, which should bescored as one of the most important gains brought about through union negotiation. It must be emphasized, however, that unless the union member is cognizant of the importance of the "machinery" he may be steered clear of it in efforts to keep him in the dark as to its implications. Any employee with a legitimate Grievance may use this Procedure which gives him the right of appeal to the Governor of The Panama Canal. Of course, there will be misses, but intelligent use of this Procedure will be the means of changing many of the trying conditions which, aside from low pay, have plagued the "Silver" worker for more than four decades.

We call attention to another gain—PUBLICITY—which the union is using in the interests

of member and non member alike. Take for instance the Resolution made in CIO. Convention in Atlantic City recently. It is a direct endorsement of the claims of the CIO that every one of its Seven Million members will "back the attack" of the Canal Zone "Silver" worker in his fight for a better way of life—higher wages, recognition of service rendered, better housing, education, and the right to hold his head high, as a man should, instead of scraping through life like a serf.

These gains will have far-reaching effects and the members of the union must learn to evaluate them. The union did not get credit for the increase (2c.—6c.) handed to "Silver" employees July 1, of this year, but we agree with those keen observers of Canal and Railroad policies, that U.P.W.-CIO activities were, in a measure, responsible for the sudden burst of "generosity" on the part of an organization which couldn't see the necessity of increases during the war to offset the depreciation of the \$ and steadily rising prices.

We know, dear reader, that there are many other benefits which our union, have secured for you and will continue to secure through negotiation, but those members and fence sitters who are waiting for "The Hill" to blazon union gains had better not hold their breaths.

We exhort you to read well and inwardly digest the words of Panama's Foreign Minister, Don Ricardo J. Alfaro. Speaking to Labor Day paraders of Local 713, he said "Both the CIO organized group and the government (of Panama) are fighting for better working and living conditions..."

Meanwhile prepare for January 19, and the Monster Parade. Prove that prophecy false and baseless.

GRATEFUL FOR.....

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on account of his age? Possibly; he was now an old man who had worked hard for the Panama Canal under the jurisdiction of the American Government. Or was it that his poor financial condition under the Disability Relief ran him crazy? That, too, is possible. The inadequacy of this relief after years of service is enough to run anyone crazy. First you serve for years then you are cast off upon the shoulders of another government without protection.

But even worst was the fact that Alice has not received a single cent since her husband took ill. This fact brought her to office of the UPW-CIO one morning last week.

In company with a Union organizer, Mrs. Murrell paid a visit to the office of Mr. Schecker at the Silver Control Section in Balboa. Findings. George Murrell has been consigned to the Corozal Hospital more or less permanently (one dictionary says 'consign' means to give up for safe keeping or disposal, as for storage or burial). All papers concerning his comital will be turned over to the Administrator of Estates. On or about January 10th of next

year Mrs. Murrell will be required to present her marriage certificate to said Administrator of Estates and all money due her husband will be turned over to her after deductions have been made for his upkeep. The turnover: And so, Mrs. Murrell will receive approximately \$10. per month since the deductions from the Disability Relief grant to her husband will be based on a 50c. per day charge. There is also the impending increase of the daily charge from 50c. to 75c. in which case she will be entitled to approximately \$2.50 per month.

Of the entire set-up said one organizer: IS THERE NO WAY IN WHICH THESE WIVES OF RETIRED EMPLOYEES CAN SUE THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT FOR THIS SHAMELESS TREATMENT TO OLD WORKERS? THERE MUST BE; AFTER ALL, SERVING THIS GOVERNMENT ADDS UP TO ONE THING: CERTAIN OLD AGE DESTITUTION.

But Alice Murrell must have stopped thinking of such things long ago. Her chief problem now is how to make a living. It certainly was a relief to find someone who could guide her in getting what little remained and who could be trusted to wage a vigorous campaign to remedy the situation. For is the Government famous for finding its employees and their dependents to give them that which is due them? That is not known.

Of the CIO help Mrs. Murrell wrote: I wish to thank the officials of the CIO for their prompt and efficient handling of my grievance with Mr. Schecker of the Silver Personnel."

American Ashamed..

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same money. And the schools, you must surely study the schools and see the shame of the United States. In the gold schools which are very beautiful and have very good teachers and opportunities up to Jr. college, and in the silver schools teachers taken from the eighth grade to teach the grades and high school. High schools have been introduced in the silver districts only recently and the teachers are eighth grade pupils. Children in the silver schools are taught mostly "gardening" and when they are out of school where can they use gardening? In the cafeterias I found wages as low as 20 cents an hour. No colored person can rise to a supervisory position — always some white person will be their supervisor. In the housing field I have only touched the surface. I found in the silver districts the price higher in comparison with the gold districts and the conveniences inferior — less room, lack of refrigeration, no hot water, unfurnished, in the silver districts.

I beg you to investigate these things thoroughly, leave the governor and the army officers and go by yourself so you can really see what is going on, and then see that these things are cleaned up so that when I return here in the future I will not need to be ashamed that I am an American.

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