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ACCION

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EDITORIA PANAMA AMERICA, DICIEMBRE DE 1947

EDITORIAL

FACING THE ENEMY

By A. M. PARCHMENT

"Close ranks and fight the enemy!" is the order of the day for us, the members of Local 713. This command must be obeyed promptly to wage an all-out battle against the enemy within and the enemy without.

In closing our ranks we shall present a solid front to our outside enemies — the hostile sections of the press, the unfriendly bosses, and the unscrupulous rival labor organizations. Our atomic weapon to demolish the stronghold of the sniping sections of the press is to set our house in order so that only news of decisive victories for the needy workers can be gleaned from our activities. If certain sections of the local press can exist only on foul garbage, let them starve by offering a wholesome diet of strength-giving, untainted food from the coffer of a smoothly operating and democratic trade union. Let the unfriendly editors and correspondents revert to cannibalism to satisfy the cravings of a putrid maw.

The unsympathetic bosses and scheming rival labor unions may be neutralized by the same defence which shall be a strong local which will be so comforting to the oppressed worker that intimidation and innuendoes will be boomerangs in the hands of our enemies. Since the external enemies can reach us with damaging blows only through the holes in our armor, let us fearlessly tackle the immediate problem of setting up a smoothly functioning labor machine protected by a 100% membership.

Let us close ranks and smother the enemy within. Inept leadership, the corraling of power, loose organization, and idleness are contributing factors to internal dissensions and dishonesty. We must reset our sights and train our guns on the important targets.

Our criteria of effective leadership should be based on production record. Indiscriminate damning of "intellectuals" is a dangerous trend that tends to create new factions, glorify ignorance, and shatter the aspirations of a group that for forty years has been pleading for higher education. On the other hand, suppressing leadership from the ranks of the common laborer snaps the mainspring of our labor machine and bequeaths to us a beautiful, garnished casing that lacks within the welcome throb of power. Our leaders should be selected and maintained in office on their production. We can no longer support hitch-hikers.

Whereas it may be necessary to guard certain of our strategic moves from the public ear, we should normally be the first to break to our membership the news of important developments in the Local. Speedy release of information provides potent weapons of defence for the rank and file and nullifies distortions by the ever-alert enemy.

We must protect the close cooperation that should exist between the International and the Local. It has been stated openly by the International that it is looking forward to the near future that will find us conducting our own affairs without the immediate supervision of the Regional Office. This declaration introduces an in-service training for our leaders who will be gradually exposed to the experiences of leadership under the guidance of the International. Mutual respect on the part of the International and the Local officers will be the keynote to harmony.

Those officers, swept out by the recent elections into the verdant fields of the rank and file, should regain strength in the new pastures and grow in stature to meet the annual election harvest with an impressive record of union-building through cooperation. Production volume will pay off at the next elections.

Let us close our ranks and face the enemy! Let us dedicate ourselves to the task of organizing the un-organized. Let us heed the parting words of International Vice-President Thomas Richardson, "The Union is in your hands now. Take care of it and protect it as if it were your own child. It is important to you as your own child."

Convention

to get 100% membership and we are going to get it."

Second Day--Officers' Report

The session on the final day began with an inspiring invocation by Mrs. B. Thorbourne. The Officers' Report was then read by Cespedes Burke, Recording and Corresponding Secretary. This report gave a comprehensive picture of the first-year operations of the Local and included the financial report which was given by Edward Gaskin, Financial Secretary-Treasurer.

Report of Resolutions Committee

The Resolutions Committee report was tendered and resolutions on the following were adopted: Appreciation of President Jimenez; Appreciation of Governor Mehaffey, Col. Wang, and other C. Z. officials; Decent Housing; Re-affirmation of Faith in Democracy; MacSherry Report; Minimum Wage; Decent Retirement Plan; Educational Facilities; Basic Wage Increase; Pay Increase for Canal Seamen; Cooperation with the International; and Appreciation of Edward Cheresch and Sister Cheresch.

Weinstein's Address

Robert Weinstein, Director of Organization in his brief speech extended greetings from President Flaxer and from Jack and Peggy Strobel. He said, "There is no difference between the International and the Local. There is one important thing in any organization and that is go pick your enemy, keep your eye on him, and fight. You have plenty of enemies who try to destroy your organization. Look for them and fight them."

He lashed out vehemently at a certain newspaper editor whose distortions and villifications were aimed at the destruction of the Local. He struck at the internal wranglings and ended by declaring, "When you fight all around for democratic rights you are often dubbed subversive. Max and I could become loyal Americans, in the estimation of many, if I said that from tomorrow the CIO would be giving you a "B" Charter which means giving you no rights. . . . If you work together with the International we can bring home the bacon."

Report of Constitution Committee
Many minor changes in the Constitution were recommended and adopted by the Convention. The most important amendment was that which allowed the rank and file to elect chapter officers.

Election of Officers

After the report of the Publicity Committee which planned for an improved "Accion" and for added propaganda, the election of officers was conducted by Brother Cespedes Burke with the following results: President, Pascual Ampudia; First Vice-President, Ernest Williams; Second Vice-President, David Alexis; Secretary-Treasurer, Cecil H. Hall; Corresponding and Recording Secretary, Foster Bournes; Trustees, Medora Sangster, Manley Rodriguez, Vernon Harper.

The Convention came to a close with the singling of Union songs.

**Are you a member?
Join Today!**

A SISTER PROTECTED

Emeline Ashby, IC No. 219945, an employee of the coffee Roasting Plant, Commissary Division, was discharged from service on November 15, 1947 for "insubordination" with ratings of "mediocre" for workmanship and conduct. Investigation on this case after the grievance was filed, proved that Sister Ashby, on trying to explain why production was slowed up, after management had reprimanded her on slowing down the work, was considered committing "insubordination."

This grievance was processed in the second stage by Organizers Evering and Dean with unfavorable results but when taken up by the Organizers to the third stage brought about a reversal of the decisions of the early stages. Sister Emeline Ashby was reinstated on November 28, 1947.

Sweatshop . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

been established for the regular granting of rest leave to the workers. A time clock will be shortly installed so that every employee may have an accurate record of his overtime. Two of the employees whose sick leave had been refused by the Manager will now receive pay for their sick leave, and one employee who had been refused a raise for over two years will receive a boost on January 1st.

Many other gains were won for the Bakery employees, too numerous to mention. Now they feel for the first time that they are breathing the free air of democracy and not the stifling congestion of a concentration camp.

The employees and Union officials agree that Mr. Taylor and his assistants were extremely fair in their handling of the matter and displayed concern and justice in their correction of the abuses.

INJURY AWARD REGAINED

Brother Samuel Robinson, employed by the Panama Railroad, was injured by an army vehicle in June of 1946. He claimed damages of \$780.00 but was awarded only \$386.60. He refused the award and it was sent back to Washington. He stood in danger of receiving nothing so he took his case to Organizer Millwood. The wheels started turning and a path was cut through Washington red tape. Brother Robinson has now been promised his award and he will soon be richer by \$386.50.

DISABILITY RELIEF
RETROACTIVE

Brother Henry Blugh, employed at Ancon M.E.D., was terminated on Sept. 2, 1947. He experienced difficulty in obtaining another job and was unsuccessful in his petition for Disability Relief. Organizer Millwood took up his case and not only won him Disability Relief but was able to get it retroactive to the day on which he was discharged. Brother Blugh received three month's payments on December 2nd.

STAFF CHANGES

The Pacific Side organizing staff of Local 713 experienced some changes as a result of the return of Edward Atherton to his Panama Railroad job because of a reduction in force among the organizers, and the voluntary quitting of Ernest Hay who is back at his old job with the Panama Railroad.



EDWARD ATHERTON

Edward Atherton, a charter member of Local 713, was elected Chief Steward by the Provisional Board set up by Len Goldsmith. He obtained leave from the Panama Railroad and worked for the Union for a year as organizer until his release because of economy measures recently adopted by the Local. Atherton was in charge of the following units on the Pacific Side: Commissary, Laundry, Army, Panama Railroad, and Tivoli Hotel.



ERNEST HAY

Ernest Hay, also a charter member, played an important role in the founding of the Canal Zone Workers' Union which preceded Local 713, UPW-CIO. He was an organizer for a year and supervised the following units: Health Department, Motor Transportation, Building Division, District Quartermaster, and Supply Department.

Filling the vacancy left by Ernest Hay is Herman Moore, present Chairman of the Balboa Chapter and member of the Local Executive Board. Moore was shop steward among the Canal seamen and was Chapter Steward of the Balboa Stewards' Council. He has been assigned

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PAY BOOST

Dock workers employed on the Atlantic and Pacific docks received a 2c hourly boost on November 15th. It was estimated that over 1500 workers shared in this increase.

This raise for dock workers followed negotiations held by the Union with Canal Zone officials in the latter part of October. This was the second increase recently received by the dock workers — the first being on October 5th for more than 150 employees.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS