

## EDITORIAL ALL-OUT ORGANIZING DRIVE STARTS IN FEBRUARY

### PEAK STRENGTH NEEDED FOR 81st CONGRESS

An organizing drive to make every employee of the Canal Zone a Union member was launched on February 1st following weeks of planning and preparation by the Executive Boards and Steward Councils of each Chapter. The drive is to be carried on for a period of three months until April 30th.

The Executive Board of Local 713, in instituting the drive, called for an all-out effort on the part of every officer and steward to "sell" the union to those employees who have neglected to do their share in upholding the organization and in helping to work for improvements in wages and working conditions which the Local has already achieved.

In an appeal to all the Chapters, President Ampudia declared, "There is an urgent need to raise the minimum wages of the so-called 'silver' workers and to provide every employee with a substantial increase in wages. The need for a decent retirement system is obvious. There is a crying need for more adequate housing. These things we can obtain only if every employee realizes that he must be part of our organization and adds his strength to the union."

"The 81st Congress has recently convened and our International Union will put on a legislative drive to secure the passage of basic legislation which will help the 'silver' employees. The success of the legislative drive will depend on the success of our organizing drive. Acceptance of our bills will depend on the strength and the numbers supporting our union."

"From our past experience I know that all officers and stewards will give their utmost cooperation in this drive."

The Executive Board of each Chapter has been constituted as the organizing committee for the Chapter and is responsible for all Chapter activities in the drive. Block Captains and their assistants have been appointed to canvass all areas in the various communities and make personal contact with all non-members. The publicity committees and educational committees in the Chapters have prepared comprehensive programs to assist the stewards and members in the drive.

Altho last year's drive provided a bargain rate or concession on the reinstatement fee the present drive makes no concessions and the reinstatement fee remains at \$6.00. However, all those employees desiring to reinstate will be able to do so by making partial payments or installments on the \$6.00 fee.

Charts and graphs have been prepared to depict the progress of each Chapter in the drive and their standing from week to week. Altho no definite prize for the winning Chapter has yet been decided upon it is expected that the Chapter taking first place at the culmination of the drive will be properly awarded.

Already Gatun Chapter has challenged Gamboa, the winner in last year's drive and Cristobal has hurled a challenge to Balboa. It is foreseen that with these challenges already made, competition for first place and between individual chapters will be very keen.

Regional Director Brodsky, commenting on the organizing drive, emphasized that "now, more than ever, we must show all those enemies of our union who have not failed to malign us at every opportunity, and who have recently intensified their attacks, that Local 713 can fight back and fight back in increasing numbers. The three months of the drive must be months of activity for every member of the union. Every member must become an organizer. A 100% membership is the most effective answer to our critics."

## S.O. THE A.F. OF L. . . .

(Continued from page 1)

suffered a drastic change of heart and are now going to make every effort for better working and living conditions for this maltreated group. Below is an excerpt from the mimeographed minutes of the Canal Zone Metal Trades Council of its meeting on December 19, 1948:

"Meeting with the Governor December 14th about the visit of the C. I. T. Committee, this discussion led into the question of housing Panamanians in the Canal Zone. The Governor agreed that there was nothing in the treaties that required the housing of citizens of the Republic of Panama in the Zone, but stated it was good policy as it assured a reliable supply of labor and was done mainly for this reason. The Committee, Brothers Jones, Price, Dillman and the President pointed out that as the former Governors had always said there was no more building sites in the Zone and always gave that as one of the reasons the McCarran Amendment couldn't be put into effect and that we felt that the Panamanians should be moved into the Republic of Panama since they claim they are always being discriminated against in the Canal Zone and surely they wouldn't object to living in their own country, which we are led to believe is the greatest country in the world. Also as the U. P. W. has just announced that they are going to demand that our government build them better houses and furnish more recreation, amusement and schools. If the things the U. S. furnish are not good enough they should move into the excellent quarters and attend the shows and schools and buy their groceries in the Republic where they surely will get better treatment as it is their own, and then we would have more room for housing the U. S. Citizens in the Canal Zone."

This sarcastic attack hardly sounds like the good neighbor policy to a group of employees that they are trying to organize.

## UNCLE DUDLEY

SAYS:

If the A.F. of L. really wanted to investigate discrimination, they didn't have to come all the way to the Canal Zone. They could have sent a committee to look into the discrimination practised by their own unions in the States.

Considering all the anguished wails emitted by local newspapers over the dropping of the 25% differential for certain "gold" employees, we'd like to see one little tear shed over "silver" wage scales.

Things must be getting tough in the Commissary Division these days. We can remember the days when they used to give a sandwich and a bottle of soda to the employees once a year when they worked at night, completing the annual inventory. This year, if you eat on the Commissary it'll cost you 20 cents.

Did you read those letters of protest when a local newspaper columnist pointed out how you can feed a family on \$20 a week? We wonder what the readers would have said if they were shown how to feed, clothe, house, and adequately care for a family on \$18.00 weekly — the average "silver" wage.

I understand people are patching up the holes in their apartments these days with the stock of a certain weekly news paper.

This comes straight from the minutes of the Metal Trades Council meeting of December 19, 1948: "Brother Jones stated that his committee (the Local AFL committee which will conduct the AFL group) hopes to show the Latin-American delegation that there is no discrimination shown here, but that we do believe in segregation, and we shall try to show them our side of the story and get them to understand our situation if possible." Is it any wonder we got a whitewash?

The worst part about the so-called A.F. of L. Investigating Committee is that the Canal Zone will reek for months from the stench of the red herring they dragged across the trail of discrimination.

But maybe we didn't read correctly. Let's move on in the minutes and see what else they say. On page 8, we read the following:

"A motion was made, duly seconded and passed, that the Legislative Committee recommend that the Metal Trades Council adopt the new bill as presented by the Legislative Representative, as a substitute for the McCarran amendment and, that he be instructed to do all in his power to have it passed at the 81st session of Congress".

So they are still pressing for the McCarran amendment, or a substitute. How this contrasts with the mournful tears shed by the A. F. of L. every so often over the lamentable plight of the "silver" employees. The whole picture is so ludicrous that it is not difficult to imagine some A. F. of L. official saying, "Look how we kick 'em around now. Wait 'til we get them in the A. F. of L. Then they'll actually be paying for the privilege of being kicked around. Ho! Ho! is that a riot?"

What you also forgot to mention is that many A. F. of L. international unions officially practise discrimination against their own colored members. Some of the unions bar colored members from voting for officers or on policies. Others bar them from holding office. Still another type of discrimination is to put all colored members in separate Jim Crow locals from the white members.

This all adds up to such a frightful record of deceit, treachery, duplicity, and hypocrisy that we wonder how any self-respecting organization could stomach it.

## TODAY'S TRENDS

By FOSTER BOURNES

Even in the midst of bedlam and stentorian shouting a thin small voice pipes up courageously and is heard. A NEWSPAPER — The "Civil Service Reporter" of Washington, D.C., commends the UPW on its fight against violations of the President's FEPC Order, and against discrimination!

They say "This is a fearless and outspoken appraisal of discrimination in Government service which does exist, in spite of official denials. What the article failed to point out is that much discrimination is so intangible, and has been accepted so long that the overt instances which can be proven are only a symptom of the whole dreadful problem... a problem which must be solved for the sake of common decency and fair play."

The UPWA has taken quite a beating lately because of its alleged following of the Communist Party line. Whether or not any of its members are Communist (and in these days anyone who mutters behind his hand that spy probes may make good reading, but why doesn't Congress DO something about the housing shortage, is apt to be called a Communist by somebody), THE UPWA DOES GO TO BAT FOR ITS MEMBERS and does DARE to differ with the prevailing trend on controversial subjects". Bien Gracias Amigos.

When the cost living spirals upward, it carries everything along with it except wages. That's not good for the consumer as a rule, but it hits hardest at the low income group, since a cost of living index does not distinguish between economic classes. That is when workers are compelled to fight for one of two things. Prices must come down, or wages must go up to compensate for the devaluation of currency. This principle holds if the standard of living is not to be impaired, and since we too are hitched to the high cost of living we join forces with those who clamor for substantial across-the-board increase for "silver" employees NOW.

If figures compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics mean anything so far as a "subsistence" budget goes, then the "silver" employees are beyond the pole. It is indeed difficult to figure out, even theoretically, how to subsist on a wage scale so far below the "emergency" budget figure. Therefore we are calling for an upward revision of the existing wage scales so as to secure a more adequate alignment between present wage rates and what is considered even sub-standard for American workers. If we bawl, loud and long, it is because the squeeze has become unbearable. We feel that Government — our employer — must take notice, must legislate if necessary to narrow the ever widening gap between wages and prices.

## OVER 100 COMMISSARY SECTION HEADS RECEIVE GRADE BOOSTS New Position of Commissary Manager Ordered

Over one hundred section heads in commissaries through out the Isthmus were upgraded last month as the log jam was cleared on many appeals that had been made by the union with the Administration.

These grade increases came as a result of a comprehensive survey made of Commissary section heads by the Personnel Office following a number of protests made by the Union on classifications. Most of the employees involved moved up either one, two, or three grades.

In addition, the employees who headed the commissaries at Madden Dam, Summit, and Cocoli (now Rio Grande) are now classified as Commissary Managers. They were formerly classified as Section Heads but are now moved into the newly created positions of Commissary Manager A, grade 10, and Commissary Manager B, grade 11.

## ATLANTIC SIDE . . .

(Continued from page 2)

huge success. He declared, "This is the first time that the UPW-CIO has been called upon to participate in the carnival celebrations. We have accepted this invitation with the understanding that the members and friends of the UPW-CIO will help, to the best of their ability, in making our participation a resonant success."

## ACCION

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