

UE Program on Unemployment

The UE convention at Cleveland reaffirmed belief in Franklin D. Roosevelt's first economic right—that every man and woman willing and able to work has the right to a job.

It recommended a practical program for the federal government and states to fight unemployment.

"Government and management are united in efforts today to convince the American people that unemployment of 4 to 7 millions is 'normal,'" the convention stated.

"It is true that in the past 20 years there has been no full employment in the United States on peacetime conditions. But we reject this kind of 'normalcy!'"

Rights of Unemployed Members

Over objections of the James B. Carey faction, the convention upheld the right of unemployed UE members to maintain themselves in good standing in their locals by paying 10 cents a month dues. The convention adopted the majority report of the constitution committee interpreting the clause on unemployed members in this way.

The Carey group's minority report would have left it to the by-laws of each local to determine the rights of jobless members. Carey followers admitted that they have deprived unemployed members of their rights in some locals. They have discriminated against laid-off members by dropping them from the union as soon as laid-off, or by admitting unemployed members to meetings but not letting them speak or vote on all or certain issues.

Chief Points of Program

The UE program on unemployment calls for:

A federalized employment service and unemployment compensation system covering all workers and providing at least \$40 a week in benefits, plus \$5 for each dependent, as long as a worker is unemployed.

Extension and increase of G. I. unemployment benefits until July, 1951, and expansion of G. I. education programs.

Federal, state and local public works programs.

Federal moratorium on evictions, foreclosures and debt proceedings against the unemployed and strikers.

Elimination of trade restrictions on exports.

Immediate legislation to improve old age pensions, remove tax burdens from low-incomes, provide the dollar minimum wage with premium pay for overtime beyond 35 hours; repeal Taft-Hartley, etc.

Riesel and Union-Star Do Another Job for GE

The Union-Star on September 21 moved Victor Riesel's so-called labor reporting from the inside to the top of page 1 with a heavy black three-column headline about "Leftists" trying to "force a strike at GE and Westinghouse."

There is nothing particularly remarkable about Riesel distorting an old news-story in an effort to smear workers. His free lying is known to 301 members. But the Union-Star knew that the Riesel piece was nothing but a lying rehash of an old announcement. It knew that the September 26 joint meeting of the GE and Westinghouse conference boards of UE had been announced officially to all the papers eight days earlier. It knew that the vote for the call was unanimous in a negotiating committee meeting which included Carey's red-baiting candidates, Frederick Kelley and Michael Fitzpatrick.

But the Union-Star blew up the scare story just the same, in an effort to prejudice the public against the GE workers' bargaining demands.

No, the newspapers are not out to smear only so-called "left wingers." They're out to smear any fight by workers to better their conditions.

What a Testimonial!

A salaried worker, who thinks UE negotiations are helping the office workers, calls our attention to a peculiar item among the letters to Works Manager Lewis J. Male so proudly displayed by the Works News. The letters are from worshipful employees who agree with the Male letters' attacks on the union's bargaining proposals.

One letter said:

"If at any time I'm not satisfied with my job, I can always quit and look for another."

"After all beggars can't be choosers. I worked 24 years for the company and I'm well satisfied."

Well, if he's satisfied being a beggar after 24 years, that's his right. Evidently he does not really think he can find another job very easily.



Amendment Strengthens UE Against Disrupters

The national UE convention last week strengthened the union's defense against raiding and secession activities by an amendment to the constitution.

This amendment provides that if a local does not bring to trial a member charged with engaging in raiding or secession activities, the General Executive Board can conduct the trial. Decision of the GEB can be appealed to the next general UE convention.

Did You Know?

The farmer is going rapidly and increasingly broke. It's the big food monopolies, not the farmers, that make profits from high food prices.

Farm income for the first seven months of 1949 was 9 per cent less than the same period in 1948. Farm debts increased \$226,000,000 in 1948, reaching a new high of \$5,500,000,000. Most of this debt is owed on small, family-sized farms.

The full report of official actions of the national UE convention will be in the national UE News appearing Monday, Oct. 3.

Speak for GE, Lemuel; UE Thinks for Itself

In one of his most open efforts to tell UE members how to run their union, L. R. Boulware in his Works News propaganda page last week urged GE workers to drop all efforts to win any benefits in negotiations this year.

Boulware said this was because there already is a pension plan at GE, and because a "pattern wage increase seems," Boulware says, to be "a dead issue."

Boulware forgets that many unions don't consider wages a dead issue just because three panel members in the steel case said so. At least one major group, in rubber, is on strike over the issue, and the Ford workers have voted to strike on the same issue.

Boulware also forgets that UE members have found that GE pensions are much too low. They have found that there is an urgent need for a 35-hour week with 40 hours' pay, to make GE rehired laid-off workers instead of laying off more of those now employed.

Anyway, UE members have shown a preference for using their own "calm judgment," not Boulware's.

ELECTRICAL UNION NEWS

THE VOICE OF LOCAL 301

U. E. R. & M. W. A.

C. I. O.

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EXTRA

This special issue was ordered by the editorial committee in order that the membership may promptly get the facts on the membership meeting last Thursday night. The newspaper stories were distorted as usual.

MEMBERSHIP ACTS ON BARGAINING AND CONVENTION

Despite a highly-organized effort by Carey supporters to destroy democratic procedure and prevent consideration of the bargaining situation, the membership meeting Thursday night took the following important actions:

It unanimously ratified the program of the GE and Westinghouse Conference Boards. This program calls for activities to put pressure on the company in support of the UE negotiations. It authorizes the national negotiating committees to call for a strike vote if the company still refuses to budge. Leo Jandreau pointed out that in UE strike authorization can come only from the membership's secret ballot vote.

The membership by a big majority adopted the report of Local 301's ten delegates to the UE convention. The big first and third shift meeting at the Armory gave the report an overwhelming majority, despite an effort by Frank Kriss to break up the meeting by a completely illegal attempt to declare it adjourned without a vote or even a motion. The much smaller second shift meeting at the union hall which included numerous shouting and booing Carey supporters from the first shift, voted to table action. The first meeting's margin of votes for the report was considerably more than the whole second shift attendance. This means an over-all majority for the report.

The Carey group showed its hand from the start by moving to postpone discussion of the strike issue until after the convention report. The later developments showed that this would have prevented any discussion of bargaining at all by tying up the whole meeting in factional issues.

Organized groups of Carey supporters also started right in booing and trying to drown out speakers.

James B. Carey and his defeated candidate for UE president, Frederick Kelley, made a surprise appearance and were admitted. After their usual red-baiting speeches, they left before the vote and while Leo Jandreau was still speaking.

President Frank C. Kriss put the adoption of the 301 delegates' report to a vote. When a show of hands resulted in a big majority voting "aye", Kriss did not take the "no" vote but accepted a motion to table. A member pointed out that this was an obvious violation of procedure, Kriss suddenly declared the meeting adjourned and ran off the platform. He was followed by Frank Fiorillo, recording secretary. A small part of the meeting left the hall with them. Vice-President William G. Hodges took the chair and ruled that there had been no adjournment. Assistant Recording Secretary John P. Green took the minutes. There was an overwhelming show of hands for the report and a handful against.

Hodges declared that Kriss' conduct was "in gross violation of all ethics and democratic procedure".

uopwa-local 70

35 HOUR WEEK at 40 HOURS PAY to PROTECT JOBS