

# PANAMA LABOR NOT AIDED BY A. F. L. STAND

## *Fundamental Demands are Ignored*

By MANUEL GOMEZ, Sec'y.,  
All-America Anti-Imperialist League.  
Article V.

Hopeful Panaman workers, struggling desperately for decent living conditions in the face of the military strikebreaking occupation of the City of Panama by United States forces, must have experienced a momentary thrill at hearing that the American Federation of Labor convention in Atlantic City had adopted a resolution asking the U. S. government to explain why American soldiers are engaged in breaking the strike of worker-tenants in a friendly and supposedly independent country.

The Panamans have no confidence in the friendly purposes of Wall Street, nor of its ready instrument, the United States government; but they feel instinctively that the American working class is their ally. They know that imperialism is as much the foe of the workers in this country as in Central America and the Caribbean area. This is especially true of the organized workers, who are pitted against the bosses in day-to-day struggles, and whose own interests must force them to fight the debauching of labor standards by American imperialism. It is but natural that the beleaguered Panamans should look to the convention of the A. F. of L. for help.

### **Resolution an Insult.**

Actual reading of the resolution, however, must have brought disillusion. It was not a rank and file resolution. It was introduced by President Green with the approval of the other misleaders of the federation, and its purpose was plainly not to render support to the Panamans but to prevent such support. The bureaucrats knew that the rank and file members of the A. F. of L. would be waiting for some action by the convention in regard to the Panama situation, and the idea was evolved of lulling them to sleep by a resolution. Digging into the actual phrases of the resolution adopted, one sees that they are decidedly ambiguous, that they are in fact an insult to our striking brothers of Panama.

The resolution provides no real help for the Panamans, neither in their immediate struggle against bosses and landlords, nor in their long-term struggle to get free of American imperialism.

It does not demand the unconditional withdrawal of American troops.

It does not condemn their presence on Panama soil.

It does not even express sympathy with the Panaman strikers.

It merely asks the United States government to investigate the use of the troops for "alleged" strike-breaking activities in Panama.

### **A. F. of L. Treachery.**

After all, it was to be expected. The A. F. of L. bureaucrats—partners in insurance and banking schemes

(Continued on page 2)

# Panama Labor Is Not Aided by the A. F. of L.'s Stand

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(Continued from page one)

which draw their substance from imperialist exploitation—have never shown any fellow-feeling for the lowly Panamans. In fact when Gompers was in Panama last year, he proposed to Secretary of War Weeks that no Panamans be given employment in the Canal Zone (which is technically Panaman territory) above the grade of laborers or messengers!

The resolution introduced by Green, besides being a sham and a betrayal, perfectly expresses the unity of Green, Woll and the other A. F. of L. bureaucrats with the United States government, and with American capitalism—that is to say, with American imperialism. Their purposes are neatly summed up in another resolution adopted at the Atlantic City convention, supporting the Monroe doctrine and going so far in service of American imperialism as to declare a “labor Monroe doctrine” against “European or revolutionary labor influence in Latin-America.”

Side by side with Wall Street's “Pan-American Union,” the A. F. of L. misleaders have created the “Pan American Federation of Labor” which supports imperialism at every point.

This is “pan-Americanism,” the slogan of J. P. Morgan, Calvin Coolidge and William Green, alike! But it is not the slogan of American labor. The American workers demand solidarity and support of their Latin-American brothers. And “support” means action, not two-faced resolutions. The presence of American soldiers in Panama is a test for every self-respecting worker. What are we going to do about it?