

THE BROTHERHOOD



On the 25th of August, 1925, in the City of New York, THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS was born. In the home of W. H. DesVerney, Roy Lancaster, A. L. Totten and the writer foregathered to plan the movement to organize the Pullman porters and maids. Joined by Brothers Frank R. Crosswaith and S. E. Grain the battle began.

It sprang out of a burning desire of the porters for the right and power to redress and correct long-existing wrongs that were naturally practiced upon them in the absence of their own organization. It was a resolute revolt against the Employee Representation Plan, an organization of, by and for the Pullman Company, which had utterly failed satisfactorily to settle their grievances. It had failed because the porter officials of the Plan were not free to speak up in the interest of their fellow-aggrieved porters because of the fear that they too, the porter officials, would be asked to turn in their keys.

It is significant that in less than a year The Brotherhood won an eight (8) percent wage increase, change in the Time Sheet and better treatment generally for the porters and maids, results that have taken many unions ten and fifteen years to achieve. And this was done in the face of the bitterest and most determined opposition, backed by hundreds of millions of dollars of the Company, which bought up spineless Negro leaders and corrupt editors. And despite the importation of a few Filipinos to serve on Club Cars as a *scare* to the men, to break the morale of the organization, The Brotherhood men, with their heads erect, souls undaunted and heart throbs attuned to the hymn of solidarity, are moving steadily and victoriously forward. Out of every encounter The Brotherhood has emerged holding aloft the banner of victory.

But the struggle of the Brotherhood is far more significant than the benefits it has won and will win for porters and maids. Its influence and power have wide and deep ramifications in every phase of Negro life, developing and crystallizing a new hope, a new promise, a new courage and a new spirit of self-reliance, of independence and the *will to win* justice, economic, political and social, regardless of cost.

Brotherhood men are one hundred per cent union men. Their aim is to give one hundred per cent service as well as to demand one hundred per cent justice. Realizing that a Winner never quits and a Quitter never wins, The Brotherhood bows to the public with the slogan. Service not Servitude as the chart and compass of its struggle for simple economic justice, a struggle which will be long and determined since a practical consideration of the question leads to the conviction that the Company will fight for its Plan to the last ditch. But if we will work and not grow weary, fight and not lose the faith, we cannot fail. Long Live the Brotherhood! Long Live the New Negro! Long Live the Spirit for Economic Freedom!

Faithfully yours,

A PHILIP RANDOLPH.