

IR NEWS

THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

I R NEWS is a publication of the Institute of Industrial Relations and University Extension, University of California, in cooperation with the Los Angeles and San Diego Chapters of the Industrial Relations Alumni Association. The purpose of I R NEWS is to bring more closely together various groups interested in the Certificate Program — persons taking Extension classes, graduates of the Program, Extension instructors, staff of the Institute of Industrial Relations, and community leaders in the field.

APRIL, 1956

AFL-CIO MERGER INEVITABLE; NO REVOLUTIONARY EFFECTS SHOULD BE EXPECTED, SAYS LABOR ECONOMIST

The recent merger of the AFL and CIO came about as a result of the recognition by leaders of both organizations that there were no fundamental differences dividing them any longer. Although the merger has great significance, it will not have substantial influence on the ability of unions to organize, engage in political action, or negotiate more liberal contracts with employers. These were among the major opinions expressed by Dr. Philip Taft, noted Professor of Economics at Brown University, to the 120 persons attending the graduation dinner honoring students who have recently completed the Certificate Program in Industrial Relations.

Dr. Taft began his talk by discussing the background of the split in the labor movement which resulted in the formation of the CIO in 1936. "The predominant reason for the split was the dispute over which unions should have jurisdiction over mass production industry employees. The AFL was founded on the principle of exclusive jurisdiction—that each affiliated union had the right to organize all of the workers in a specific craft or trade." With the growth of mass production industries the AFL made efforts to organize industrial workers, but whenever these efforts were successful, the craft unions fought bitterly among themselves for these new members. The craft unions were unwilling to agree that "the dominant union should organize the whole plant" and that the "crafts should cede their jurisdictions in these industries." The unions which formed the CIO went ahead and organized industrial workers on this basis anyhow, and were suspended from the AFL.

After seeing the success of the CIO in organizing the auto, steel and rubber industries, the AFL craft unions developed plans of their own for organizing the mass production workers. "Each AFL union went out and organized wherever it could. Within a few years, the AFL had organized an additional 7-8 million workers. The whole idea of jurisdiction as applied to mass production was destroyed."

According to Dr. Taft, "by 1940, the major issue that divided the AFL and CIO was resolved." Then a number of developments occurred that made merger possible. Some problems were solved "by the death of William Green and Philip Murray" and by the "withdrawal of John L. Lewis from both the AFL and the CIO." These men had personified the disagreements which led to the formation of the CIO. In addition, "the AFL and CIO unions had been forced to cooperate in their relations to government during the war periods." The final barrier to merger was removed in 1950 "when the CIO expelled its Communist-dominated unions. There was no longer any reason for the organizations to stay apart."

Dr. Taft then discussed the implications of the merger, emphasizing several important aspects of the problem:

Centralization of power—"The merger will mean no increase of power in the central organization. George Meany has no power over the affiliated unions; he neither negotiates contracts nor determines the policies of the unions. Each union will continue to develop its own collective bargaining demands based on the particular problems in its industry."

Inter-union conflicts—"Some jurisdictional controversies will undoubtedly be eliminated through the merger of international

unions with similar jurisdictions. However, many of the old rivalries will remain."

Political action—No substantial increase in union influence at the polls should be expected. Under normal conditions, "unions frequently have conflicting political interests. Unions will often line up with their employers in opposition to other unions and employers. The Teamsters and the trucking industry fight the combination of railroads and railroad brotherhoods with regard to legislation affecting transportation. It is a mistake to believe that either George Meany or the AFL-CIO controls millions of votes."

"The only time unions will really combine effectively in political action is over legislation which threatens the very existence of all unions. For example, union political efforts were greatly intensified following the passage of the Taft-Hartley Act." Union political action will be divided whenever both parties "indicate that the position of unions will not be imperiled by extreme administrations which challenge the unions' very existence."

Lobbying—The merger will bring "more unified lobbying efforts." The union officers now "may get together in advance to achieve unified support for improvements in social welfare legislation such as social security, workmen's compensation, and unemployment compensation."

Racial discrimination and racketeering—The AFL-CIO has taken a strong stand in opposition to racial discrimination and racketeering by affiliated unions. "This may establish a healthy climate strong stand in opposition to racial discrimination and racketeering, however, it should be recognized that "it is virtually impossible for any large international union, no matter how honest its officers may be, to keep a close check on all of its several thousand locals."

Organizing the unorganized—"The merger will probably have little effect on organizing. There exist, at present, substantial barriers to a large-scale organizing effort: (1) the white-collar workers in the North and West, who up to now have not demonstrated a high propensity for organizing, and (2) the South generally, where the employers are vigorously opposing the unions and where the workers, still close to the farms, are still inhospitable to organized labor. These conditions may change in time."

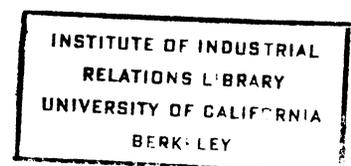
In addition, "organizing has traditionally been the function of the individual international unions, not the central federation. The Auto Workers and the Machinists do not need the assistance of the central AFL-CIO. Whenever the central federation organizes workers, the old problem will arise as to which international union is going to get the new members."

Traditions of the old AFL-CIO—Dr. Taft was asked if the merger might not destroy some of the valuable traditions which the AFL and the CIO had developed over the years. He replied: "A tradition is not a constant; it is something to look back on, but it doesn't mean the same thing all of the time. The leaders of each federation had to weigh the relative gains to their members through merger compared with what would be expected if they remained apart. The facts are that over recent years the AFL and the CIO have been converging towards each other—since both have been influenced by the same conditions. An organization that lives only on its tradition will die—and retain its tradition."

LIKE TO DISCUSS CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES? ? ?

(and who doesn't?)

You'll get your chance on APRIL 14



**CONFERENCE FOR PERSONS INTERESTED IN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
SET FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 14**

A CONFERENCE ON CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS will be held at the Institute of Industrial Relations on the UCLA campus on Saturday morning, April 14. Following the sessions, participants will adjourn to the UCLA picnic grove for an informal lunch.

The Conference is being held for UCLA Extension students taking courses related to industrial relations and for graduates of the Certificate Program. Students and graduates are cordially invited to bring wives, husbands, friends, and business associates.

The decision to hold this Conference was based on the success of the Seminar on Current Developments in Industrial Relations, held last December. The format and subjects for discussion have been changed so that the program is completely different from the December seminar. The workshops will feature more specific topics and have been lengthened to two hours to permit maximum dis-

cussion. The general session, beginning at 9:30 a.m., will be of interest to everyone; Dr. George Hildebrand, Acting Director of the Institute, will evaluate economic trends for the next ten years which will have important implications for personnel management and labor relations.

The Conference is co-sponsored by the Los Angeles and San Diego Chapters of the Industrial Relations Alumni Association, and will substitute for the regular April meeting of the Los Angeles group.

Advance registration is required. Please fill out the form below at your earliest convenience. The registration fee of \$1.50 covers everything, including coffee and doughnuts during registration as well as the picnic lunch. Further information may be obtained from Richard N. Baisden, BRadshaw 2-6161, Ext. 425, who is in charge of arrangements.

**PROGRAM OF CONFERENCE ON
CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
Saturday, April 14, 1956**

9:00 - 9:30 a.m. REGISTRATION (Room 100, Business Administration and Economics Building)
Coffee and doughnuts will be served.

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. GENERAL SESSION (Room 147, BAE bldg.)
"The American Economy: A Projection for the Next Ten Years." Dr. George H. Hildebrand, Acting Director, Institute of Industrial Relations; Professor, Department of Economics.

10:15 - 12:15 p.m. CONCURRENT SEMINARS (Choose one)

1. AUTOMATION: Bane or Boom for the Employee? (Abbott Kaplan)
2. OUR HUMAN RESOURCES: Must We Misuse Them? (Irving Weschler)
3. STAFF MEETS LINE: Must Friction Always Occur? (Melville Dalton)
4. PENSION PLANS: Are the Recently Negotiated Plans Moving in the Right Direction? (Arthur Carstens)
5. THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD: Does It Follow the Election Returns? (Benjamin Aaron)

6. UNDERSTANDING OTHERS: Is It Really the Key to Effective Leadership? (Fred Massarik)

7. AFL-CIO MERGER: Just How Important Is It? (Irving Bernstein)

8. THE 1956 ELECTION: What Role Will Labor Play? (Richard Baisden)

9. INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY: How May the Employee Contribution Be Increased? (Robert Smith)

10. INFLUENCING OTHERS: Should We Coerce, Convince, or Facilitate? (Robert Tannenbaum)

11. THE GUARANTEED ANNUAL WAGE: Millstone or Milestone? (Robert Macdonald)

12:30 PICNIC LUNCHEON (In the picnic grove behind the Art Building) Box lunches will be served. It's a lovely spot to relax, eat, and meet old and new friends.

The registration fee for the Conference is only \$1.50. If you send a check, make it payable to the REGENTS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA. Since we must order the picnic lunches in advance, it will be necessary for you to register by Thursday, April 12.



REGISTRATION FORM

**DEPARTMENT OF CONFERENCES AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES 24, CALIFORNIA**

Enclosed is \$_____ for _____ registrations for the Conference on Controversial Issues in Industrial Relations.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

SEMINAR I WISH TO ATTEND _____