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Institute of Industrial RelationsVol. 1 - No. 2
April 17, 1959HUMAN RELATIONS PROGRAMS DEFENDED BY DR. WESCHLER

Dr. Irving R. Weschler, Associate Professor of Personnel Management and Industrial Relations and Associate Research Psychologist, Institute of Industrial Relations, spoke on "A Biased View of Human Relations" at the February 25 meeting of the Alumni Association.

Dr. Weschler presented various attacks which have been leveled at the human relations field from a variety of sources. He pointed out that the concept of human relations means different things to different people, and indicated that it also evokes a variety of feelings depending upon the particular view which a respondent has of human relations.

As Dr. Weschler sees it, human relations can be looked at, first, as a body of knowledge, a new discipline, which concerns itself primarily with the study of intra- and interpersonal phenomena; second, as a "tool kit" for the practitioner providing him with guides to sound interpersonal relations. In this regard, Dr. Weschler pointed out that "good human relations cannot be faked. Gimmicks and manipulative devices may work in the short run, but will not pay off in the long run." Third, human relations may be viewed as an ethical orientation emphasizing the dignity of the individual.

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SPRING GRADUATION

Forty students will receive their Certificates on Friday, April 24, at the Nikabob Restaurant. For the graduates, the event will be the culmination of many hours of hard work. The Institute of Industrial Relations and its entire staff wishes to extend its sincere congratulations. As previously indicated, the graduation speaker will be Dr. Orme W. Phelps, Professor of Industrial Relations at Claremont Men's College, a recognized authority in his field. His subject will be "Full Employment and Inflation." To facilitate preparation, we request that you make your reservations as early as possible this year. Please call Ann Suskin at BRadshaw 2-6161, Extension 422 or 425. Hope to see you all on the 24th.

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INSTITUTE RESEARCH

Paul Bullock, Jr., a research economist on the Institute staff, is now engaged in two research projects that will be published soon by the Institute.

One deals with standards of wage determination and considers the major standards used in collective bargaining as a basis for determining wage levels, such as cost of living, productivity, ability to pay, job comparisons, etc. Emphasis is on the practical rather than the theoretical aspects of wage determination.

The other is on merit employment and will deal with governmental and private measures to eliminate discrimination in employment because of race, religion, national origin, or similar reasons. The study centers on the efforts of employers to introduce minority groups, especially Negroes, into the work force and on the results of such efforts.

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A NEW APPROACH TO WORKER EDUCATION

Two experimental programs are currently being conducted by the Institute in an attempt to develop new and more effective methods for workers' education.

The Motion Picture Costumers, Local 705, IATSE-AFL-CIO, has arranged in cooperation with the Institute a series of six meetings dealing with consumer problems. The following subjects are being discussed:

- (a) Planning the family education
- (b) Installment buying, interest rates, credit arrangements
- (c) Insurance needs and costs
- (d) Health insurance and pensions, latest methods and programs for family protection
- (e) Planning family health protection and its relation to public health, sanitation, air and water pollution, radiation, etc.

Experts in each of these fields are meeting with union stewards and members to discuss practical day-by-day consumer problems. One result has been the appointment of a committee to establish a credit union for the local. In addition, at each regular monthly meeting of the local a speaker is secured by the Institute for the Membership. Arthur Carstens was the first, speaking on "The Need for Consumer Protection." The next speaker will be Albert Tashma, M.D., who will speak on "Early Diagnosis of Glaucoma."

The second experimental program consists of biweekly meetings to discuss problems facing unions with respect to mental health, emotional problems, and alcoholism. These are being held in cooperation with the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, the San Fernando Valley Mental Health Association, and the Los Angeles City Department of Public Health, and are designed to help union officials and shop stewards in dealing with these problems.

It is hoped that these meetings will be more effective than the weekend conferences that have been held in most cases and that they will prove successful enough to set a pattern for other unions and associations and for management.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF THE INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Empathy Revisited: The Process of Understanding People, Reprint No. 77, by Fred Massarik and Irving R. Weschler.

Empathy, or social sensitivity, is the extent to which people succeed in developing accurate impressions, or actual understanding, of others. The authors maintain that the individual who has resolved most of his internal conflicts is better able to direct his energies to the understanding of others. A person, also, should endeavor to be relaxed, but not "tranquilized." While excess tension reduces empathy, its complete absence induces a state of apathy. The sole tool we use in understanding others is our own personality and, unless care is taken, distortions may be introduced by our own "built-in" perceptual equipment. We must also attempt to prevent the "fossilization" of our perceptions and maintain an open mind to the constant flow of information which may change our opinions and outlook toward people and groups.
