

From Gerard Kable, Director of Publications
Massachusetts State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Special to Saul Miller, Director of Publications
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AFL AND CIO COMPLETE

MERGER IN BAY STATE

"Resolved: That this Joint Convention does hereby adopt this constitution, with the understanding that it is subject to final approval by the National President of the AFL-CIO, - and be it further

"Resolved: that once it has been approved, representatives of both organizations shall lend their talents jointly to build, through the Massachusetts State Labor Council, a bigger and more respected labor organization in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to carry out the policies and the programs enunciated in the approved constitution."

The words had poured through the amplifiers in the main ballroom of the Hotel Bradford in Boston to reach everyone of the fourteen hundred delegates assembled there on the morning of December 6, 1958 -- then, seconds after R. J. Thomas, Assistant to AFL-CIO President George Meany, moved for adoption, fourteen hundred voices roared approval and two great organizations became one to make Massachusetts the 43rd state to complete merger.

J. William Belanger, president of the defunct CIO state body, was elected to head the merged organization. Kenneth J. Kelley, secretary-treasurer of the former state AFL, was elected to the same post in the new body.

For the two offices of executive vice president, Salvatore Camelio, secretary-treasurer of the old CIO, and John Callahan,

president of the old AFL, were chosen.

The merger ended nearly three years of negotiations and created an organization that will speak for approximately 600,000 organized workers.

J. William Belanger, in his acceptance speech, paid tribute to the officials of both organizations who served with him on the Merger Committee.

"That Committee met many times during the past several months," he said, "and spent many long hours in the discussions that led to the merger agreement. There were disagreements, of course -- it could not very well be expected that there would be none.

"But we all had faith in our objective. We were all loyal to the ideals of our respective organizations. And there was a general understanding of the difficult, practical matters on which we had to find agreement."

He pointed out that the combined strength achieved through merger would make it possible for labor to make its voice heard more clearly in its demands for improvements at the state level.

"But while we interest ourselves in the problems that directly affect labor," he added, "let us be mindful of our duty to the state as a whole . . . Let us show the people that this movement -- this great organization -- is dedicated to the good of all the state, to the good of all the citizens of our great Commonwealth."

Thirty-one vice presidents, seventeen from the AFL and fourteen from the CIO, were elected to complete the 35-man executive council stipulated in the new constitution.

The four departments established are; Committee on Political Education; Education and Research; Legislative; and Publications and Public Relations. As agreed to all through merger negotiations, all staff personnel are retained.

The AFL complement on the new Council consists of: Vincent DiFunno, Laborers; Thomas J. Rush, Street Carmen; Oscar R. Pratt, Carpenters; John F. Wipfler, Quincy CLU; Jeremiah Calnan, Laborers; Manuel F. Lewis, Gloucester CLU; Joseph D. McLaughlin, Street Carmen; Lawrence J. Thompson, IBEW; William Moran, Fitchburg CLU; James P. Loughlin, Hotel & Restaurant; Ralph Roberts, ILG; Edward Wall, Federal L. U.; James R. McCarthy, Greenfield CLU; James E. Murphy, IBEW; Arthur Actil, Carpenters; Helen T. O'Donnell, Retail Clerks; and Neil MacKenzie, Bricklayers.

The CIO complement consists of: Edward Brunnelle, IUE; Arthur LeBlue, IUE; Daniel Murray, Steelworkers; Guy Campobasso, ACWA; Robert L. Walkinshaw, UAW; Anthony Accardi, Shoeworkers; John Burns, Shipworkers; Joseph P. Sweeney, CWA; Richard B. O'Keefe, Leather; Thomas Leone, Wholesale & Retail; Thomas Binnall, Furniture; Valentine Murphy, Utilities; Benjamin Magliozzi, Packinghouse; and John Hunt, Maritime.