

Massachusetts State CIO Industrial Union Council

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TO ALL AFFILIATED LOCAL UNIONS:

Dear Sir and Brother:

Since the merger at the national level on December 5, 1955, the Massachusetts State CIO Council has repeatedly expressed its readiness to merge with the Massachusetts Federation of Labor. This readiness on our part has been proclaimed in many ways -- at conventions, in the daily newspapers on many different occasions, and from public platforms at union meetings and even at gatherings sponsored by other organizations.

When, in the fall of 1955, it became apparent that the AFL and the CIO would merge at the national level, the Massachusetts State CIO Council postponed its scheduled annual convention in anticipation that merger at the state level in Massachusetts could be accomplished early.

Shortly thereafter, a letter was sent to the AFL asking that the two groups get together for the purpose of discussing merger before holding further conventions. The AFL, however, did not agree to meet until after our convention of April, 1956.

Our first meeting with the AFL, on May 4, 1956, was the start of prolonged merger negotiations.

Other meetings in 1956 were held three times in June and once in July.

In the first six months of 1957, we held merger meetings in February, March, April, May and July.

Our most recent meetings were held September 23rd and 27th and on October 4th and 11th.

During all these months we have tried to bring about an acceptable agreement for merger of the two organizations.

At the first meetings of the merger committee, it was agreed that no statements would be given to the newspapers unless such statements were issued jointly. It was further agreed that no merger convention would be held until a merger agreement acceptable to both sides had been negotiated. The CIO has lived up to these agreements.

The National AFL-CIO had requested a report on progress of merger by August 15, 1957. We have complied with this request. (A copy of our report is enclosed.)

As you know, it is expected by the National AFL-CIO that merger should take place by December 5, 1957. In the meantime, your CIO committee has agreed to and is meeting every week with the AFL in an effort to meet the December 5th date.

We must reiterate that in order to hold a merger convention by December 5th, there must be a merger agreement acceptable to both sides. If such an agreement cannot be arrived at, the entire matter will be turned over to the National AFL-CIO for their determination.

At this time, however -- and for the CIO to continue to show its good faith in these merger negotiations -- we are calling upon your organization to make preparations now for the election of delegates to a Special CIO and Merger Convention.

We have not, as of this date, completed merger negotiations -- and we have not agreed upon a date for the convention. You will be officially notified of the dates of the convention at a later date.

We are sending you the enclosed credentials so that you can elect your delegates now in anticipation of these conventions. We are asking you to elect delegates now because the pressure of time and last minute negotiations will not enable us to give you the usual advance notice for announcement of the conventions. This will give you time to make full and adequate preparations for your election procedures.

Pending merger agreement, there might be a variance in delegate strength of our organization between our last convention and this one, but we feel this will be a minor adjustment.

We urge you to elect your delegates now. We urge also that you not only elect your full complement of delegates, but that you make arrangements to have them all attend the conventions. It is at these conventions that the future of labor in Massachusetts will be decided -- therefore, it is imperative that every local be in full attendance.

Fraternally,

J. William Belanger

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President

Salvatore Camelio

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Secretary-Treasurer

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