

## Sacramento Conference

A report by I. A. DeFrance of the Western Regional Conference of the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada held in Sacramento, California, May 19-20-21 and 22, 1946.

We arrived at Sacramento Sunday afternoon on schedule after a pleasant drive from Salem to Klamath Falls Saturday afternoon and from Klamath Falls to Sacramento Sunday. Hotel rooms were reserved and after a good shower I registered for the Conference at the Senator Hotel and located the State office buildings I planned to visit, the Retirement System and the California State Employees Association offices. The conference program disclosed that three panel discussions had been scheduled for each discussion period to run simultaneously and also that the breakfast round table discussions would be divided into ten groups, each assigned a different topic. Mr. Stewart and myself studied out a schedule so that each of us could attend different discussions and cover the most interesting parts of the conference. There were several interesting discussions that we could not attend.

The conference was opened at 9:45 A.M. Monday by Conference Chairman Roy A. Palm, Seattle Department of Civil Service. The morning discus-

### The President's Message

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lective bargaining so that employees may be heard on matters concerning the Civil Service; wages, hours, working conditions, etc. We have asked for a principle of parity pay. We are working to secure group medical and hospital coverage for employees families. None of these are selfish things and they can be secured if we continue to work hard and unselfishly.

sion was presided over by Louis J. Kroeger, Personnel Consultant, who after stating the premise "Public Personnel Administration is not an end, but a means to an end, and that end is good government," invited his panel members to tear "Civil Service" to pieces so that the delegates might hear managements criticism and appraisal and might study and consider corrective measures. The panel members were officials responsible for management of various Governmental functions and they pointed out potential hazards to be avoided particularly in the setting up of a new civil service system. Some of the criticisms offered could be recognized as forms of managements old desire for high handed freedom of action in personnel matters. Constructive criticism stressed particularly Civil Service's responsibility to be of assistance to the operating departments and to discard its concept of being a police force. It was pointed out (1) that false economy often makes a Civil Service short-handed, short of funds and incapable of promptly and properly conducting positive recruitment and personnel management, (2) that the requirement of excessive paper work results in delays and constitutes a burden on the operating departments, and (3) that hard and fast rules should be modified when they handicap more than they help public administration. Mr. Kroeger remarked after listening to the discussion that he was amazed that Civil Service functioned so well and as successfully as it does.

I did not attend the conference luncheon meeting but with Mr. Stewart called at California State Retirement System headquarters and visited with director Chapman. The California System covers more than 30,000 em-