

The Oregon STATE EMPLOYEE News

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MALCOLM H. MACEWAN - - - EDITOR

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EDITORIAL . . . "Collective Bargaining" In the Public Service a Myth

The term "collective bargaining," in the industrially acquired sense is meaningless and a delusion when used in the context of public service, and especially in a public service dedicated to the merit system as the primary vehicle of personnel administration. To have bargaining there is the element of dealing between parties having at their disposal powers to back their position. There is no such power present in the public service, at least available to the employee.

There is little indication that such power, implying work stoppage and strike, is desired in those situations where the Legislature or governing body of the political subdivision recognizes its duty to its employees.

Basically this recognition consists of the following factors:

1. Recognition of the employee by granting him conference table rights, individually or through representatives of his choosing, to the end that employee problems and desires may be made known to the Legislature.

2. The adoption of rules governing working conditions and salaries that will give the public jurisdiction a fair chance of competing on the talent market.

Of the two factors the primary one is the first mentioned. It is a characteristic of the human race that one must feel that he counts, is of importance; that the work he is doing is meaningful and has importance. The worker who is producing and knows that he is producing is a happy worker and, on being able to see the intent and end product of his work effort, will consider a work load normal and desirable that would be viewed with protest and alarm without this factor. The employee who has the idea that an attempt is being made to exercise complete domination over him is not a happy or efficient workman. This is true even though the domination is entirely benevolent.

The second factor is also important and entails a deep based sense of right and equity. It is natural to expect that you will receive like reward for the use of like skills and efforts.

There has been considerable pressure developed of recent years to grant collective bargaining rights including the full right of work stoppage and strike to the public employee. The employee himself does not want these powers and will reject them on the principle being put to vote in any jurisdiction where the Legislature or governing body recognizes its employees as being of importance, give them recognition and conference table rights and treatment the equivalent to their counterparts in private industry and other employment using like skills. Failure on the part of a legislative body to recognize these factors makes inevitable the pressure and clamor for work stoppage power for the public employee with all attendant pressure distortions which are inimical to personal administration under the merit system. —J.B.D.

JOHN BEATTY APPOINTED TO CIVIL SERVICE POST

Mr. John C. Beatty, Jr., was sworn in as Civil Service Commissioner December 12. He was appointed to succeed Mr. Philip A. Joss, who resigned in November.

Mr. Beatty is a partner in the Law Firm of Dusenbery, Martin, Beatty and Parks of Portland. He is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Portland and holds a bachelor's degree with honors from the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. He was a Harlan Stone Scholar at Columbia University Law School where he received an LLB degree in 1948.

Currently, Mr. Beatty is a member of the Judicial Administration Committee of the Oregon State Bar. He served as a member of the Oregon Board of Bar Examiners from 1953 to 1955.

Among Mr. Beatty's civic activities

are his current responsibilities as a Director of the Urban League and a member, Oregon Advisory Committee, United States Civil Rights Commission. From 1954 to 1957, Mr. Beatty was Governor, City Club of Portland and served as president of that organization in 1961-1962. He has been a member of the Mayor's Committee on Municipal Reorganization and was co-chairman of the Committee for Effective City Government in 1957-1958.

Mr. Beatty is married and the father of two children.

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