

Writer Gives Significance Of New Labor Reorganization In America

By NORMAN WALKER
NEW YORK (AP)—Here are some questions and answers on the new labor organization, the AFL-CIO:

What is it?
The AFL with 108 national unions and the CIO with 30 have banded together in a single association of unions.

How big is it?
The Labor Department, in a recent official report, estimated AFL membership at 10,900,000, the CIO's at 5,200,000, for a total of over 16 million. But officials of the new AFL-CIO claim only 13 million.

Why have they merged?
Union leaders say pooling resources and strength will give organized labor more power in bargaining with employers, organizing more workers in unions, and influencing state and national politics.

There is room for argument here. Some students of labor affairs feel the natural competition between two organizations tended to keep both more on their toes.

Will it actually increase labor's power?
It will to some extent. Affiliated unions will have the same autonomy as under the separate AFL and CIO. Any one of them can pull out at any time.

But AFL-CIO officials at the local, state and national level naturally will speak with more authority and influence than was true when there were two such officials.

A similar situation would be if the two main business associations combined, the National Assn. of Manufacturers and U. S. Chamber of Commerce. The fusion would not necessarily mean increased power but it would certainly point that way.

Will union labor be more radical or more conservative?
Traditionally the AFL has been more conservative than the CIO. It appears likely that in the blending of the two a middle ground will be reached with the organization inclined to a bit more moderate course.

This has already been indicated in resolutions adopted by the AFL-CIO convention and in suggestions that the AFL-CIO should work out a "live-and-let-live" arrangement with American industry.

Who are the top active AFL-CIO officers?
George Meany, 61-year-old ex-plumber, has been elected president and William Schnitzer, one-time bakery worker, secretary-treasurer. Both held similar posts in the AFL. Meany will get \$35,000 annual salary, Schnitzer \$33,000, the same pay they drew with the AFL.

What has happened to Walter Reuther, the former CIO chief?
Reuther, stepping aside for Meany to become one of 27 AFL-CIO vice presidents will still head the 1,200,000-member United Auto Workers union and continue to be a very powerful influence, possibly second only to Meany. Reuther was well received in initial AFL-CIO convention appearances.

Where will the AFL-CIO have its headquarters?
A new, four-million-dollar building is being made ready for occupancy in Washington. It's just across a park from the White House. All employees of both organizations are being retained and merged into one staff.

What about John L. Lewis's United Mine Workers and other unions now out of the AFL-CIO?
The 75-year-old Lewis, founder of the now-merged CIO, has at one time or another been a power in both the AFL and CIO. He has held aloof of the AFL-CIO and said the merger can't endure. Nevertheless, the miners someday may join up.

Independent railroad unions are actively considering entering the AFL-CIO. They are the Brotherhood of Firemen and Enginemen and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, with a combined membership of nearly 300,000. The Labor Department estimates the aggregate membership of unions outside the AFL-CIO at 1,800,000.

What is the new organization's official name?
"It's the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. The separate AFL and CIO couldn't agree on a new name so to get around what was a real quarrel they just kept both. Eventually, they may trim down this cumbersome title.

How about mergers within the merged?
A good deal of this is expected. For instance, the two textile workers unions are talking of a consolidation. Separate paper workers units and meat industry unions have similar plans.

Where are the areas of possible disagreement in the merged setup?
The old feud among union leaders about craft vs. industrial organization still lies smouldering. This is the issue that led to the secession two decades ago to found the CIO.

Basically, it's this. Some unions such as the carpenters and plumbers feel that anyone in their craft

should belong to their union. In industrial organization all workers in a particular establishment are organized in a single union, even whatever plumbers or carpenters are among them.

This is going to be a continuing problem which Meany, in the final analysis, is going to have to referee. About 70 of the former AFL unions and all of the former CIO unions belong to an internal pact known as the "no raiding" agreement. It binds signatory unions to submit all jurisdictional disputes to a neutral's binding decision. The agreement has worked well, as has a separate, similar deal among the building trades unions.

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