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Abstract

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Comments

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FOR OUR INFORMATION

F.O.I. appears bi-weekly from the Public Relations Office, Room 6, for the information of all faculty, staff, and students of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University. A Report of the Joint Legislative Committee on Industrial and Labor Conditions states, "The most satisfactory human relationships are the product not of legal compulsion but rather, of voluntary determination among human beings to cooperate with one another." In the same spirit, F.O.I. is dedicated to our mutual understanding.

GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF JUNE 1948 ARE EMPLOYED
IN MANY AREAS OF INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR RELATIONS

Graduates of the class of June 1948 are now employed in many areas of industrial and labor relations, Richard Hanley, Placement Secretary of the Student Personnel Office, has revealed. Graduates are engaged in industrial relations, in personnel administration, in sales, in industrial relations training work, in executive training work, in publicity, in government and labor areas, and in studies for law and advanced degrees.

Jerome Ackerman is now a law student at Harvard.

Harry Boehmke is with the Time Study Department of General Electric Company at Schenectady.

Walter Bredshoft is with the Personnel Training Program of Carter Oil Company in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Eugene Brousseau is in the Industrial Relations department of Crucible Steel Co. in Pittsburg.

William Carroll is with the Division of Employee and Community Relations, Apparatus Department, General Electric, Schenectady.

Barbara Cole is engaged in secretarial work in Harrisburg, Pa.

Robert Colbert is with the Industrial Relations Training Program of the Corning Glass Works, Corning, New York.

Anthony Crane is Assistant Manager of the Spencer Arms Hotel for the Borchard Management Corporation.

Robert Davis is a salesman for Wearever Aluminum Co. of Binghamton, working in the New York area.

Calvin Depew is with the Management Training Program of General Electric Co. in Lynn, Mass.

Elliot Doft is with the Training Program of the Princeton Knitting Mills, Watertown, Conn.

Mathew Doyle is Understudy to the Personnel Director of the Cunningham Drug Co. of Detroit, Mich.

Both Myron Carr and James Dukas are engaged in hay and grain merchandising in Ithaca and New York City.

Howard Dwyer is Election Examiner for the N.L.R.B. in the Buffalo Regional Office.

George Fallon is Business Manager of the Philadelphia Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers.

Arthur Flamm is a law student at Harvard.

George Fowler is Interviewer for the New York State Department of Labor, Division of Placement and Unemployment Insurance in New York City.

Robert Frawley is with the Industrial Relations Program of Continental Can Company, New York City.

Harvey Halberstadt plans to attend Graduate School at the University of Chicago.

Eugene Hayman is a law student at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colo.

Evelyn Brion Hecht is a Research Associate for the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell.

Christopher Henderson is Special Assistant to the Head of Industrial Relations Branch, Atomic Energy Commission, Los Alamos, New Mexico.

Charles Jones is with the Industrial Relations Division of Revere Copper and Brass Co., Rome, N.Y.

Helen Levy Kleinberg plans to attend Graduate School (Education) at Cornell University.

Edmund Koli is with the Industrial Relations division of Macy's Department Store in New York City.

William Krantz is attending the Graduate School of the University of California at Los Angeles.

Earle Lerner plans to attend Graduate School at Harvard.

Leonard Marsak is attending the Graduate School of Cornell University.

Richard Marshall is studying law at Yale University in New Haven.

Harriet Morel is a law student at Cornell.

Richard Morris is with the Industrial Relations Training Program of Remington Arms (DuPont) in Ilion, N.Y.

Henry Nichols is Employee Relations Supervisor of the Carbon Fuel Co. in Charleston, West Virginia.

Thomas Nolan is with the Executive Training Program of the American Sugar Refining Co., New York City.

Edward Peterson is with the Executive Training Program of Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company in Akron, Ohio.

Joel Rathbone is with the Industrial Relations Training Program of the National Carbon Company in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Harold Reynolds is doing newspaper work for the Wall Street Journal in New York City.

Joseph Rudd is a Publicity Writer for the Republican Campaign in Albany.

Ernest Sapelli is Instructor in Management, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, Conn.

Janet Laken Shaffner is with the Research Division of the Ohio C.I.O. in Cleveland.

Helvi Solkoe is with the Department of Research and Education, C.I.O., Washington, D.C.

Mildred Shelton plans a teaching career on the west coast.

James Smith is with the Industrial Relations Training Program of Mosta Machine Co., Pittsburg, Pa.

Leo Smith is Assistant to the Industrial Relations Manager of the Sanderson-Halcomb Plant of Crucible Steel Co. in Syracuse.

Charles Volk plans to attend law school in New York City.

HORACE SHELDON EXAMINES UNION-SECURITY PROVISIONS
OF THE TAFT HARTLEY ACT

Horace Sheldon has been working on his thesis throughout the summer, carrying on research in Buffalo. His thesis subject is "The Union Security Provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act". Specifically, the thesis deals with those sections of the Taft-Hartley Law relating to the closed shop and to the requirement of elections to authorize a union shop.

Research has consisted of a sampling of the opinions and reactions of a number of union and management leaders to determine what impact the law has had upon labor-management relations in this particular sphere.

"Both management and labor cooperated wonderfully with me in giving their reactions to the law and in making available pertinent data they had," Sheldon said.

PROFESSOR JEHRING CHEERED BY GROWING ENTHUSIASM FOR AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Professor J. James Jehring, head of the Audio-Visual Division of the School, has found a growing enthusiasm for audio-visual methods.

In a recent interview he stated: "The vital interest in the audio-visual materials available in the field of industrial and labor relations demonstrated at the two Cornell conferences this summer point to the growing importance both industries and universities are attaching to this media of communication."

"For industry," Jehring continued, "audio-visual methods serve as a means of imparting basic economic concepts to their employees as well as a means of presenting them with some factual material on the economic condition of the enterprise through films on the annual report."

"For the university professor of labor economics audio-visual materials mean having available a media through which he can make some of the abstract ideas in economics more meaningful to students."

"The reception given the programs of audio-visual materials at these conferences," Jehring said, "demonstrates the increasing importance which these groups are attaching to the audio-visual method of communication."

JOHN WINDMULLER EXPLORES "THE EXTENT, SCOPE, AND CHARACTERISTICS
OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN THE ELMIRA AREA"

John Windmuller, graduate assistant, has been working in Elmira three days per week throughout the summer, carrying on research as to the extent, scope, and characteristics of collective bargaining in the Elmira area. The research is being done in connection with his master's thesis. He has contacted management representatives of 20 of the larger firms and some 50 representatives of union locals in the area. He also contacted 66 smaller firms by letter questionnaire and has had 57% response to these questionnaires.

PROFESSOR KONVITZ SPEAKS AT HILLEL FOUNDATION CONFERENCE

Professor Milton Konvitz delivered the principal address at the annual conference of Hillel Foundation Directors and Student Leaders on Labor Day at Camp Highpoint near Kingston, N.Y.

DEAN CATHERWOOD WILL SPEAK TOMORROW AT SUPERVISORS CONFERENCE,
AND WILL PARTICIPATE IN FORUM OVER W.B.Z. SUNDAY

Dean M.P. Catherwood will speak tomorrow afternoon before the Third Annual Supervisors Conference at the University of New Hampshire in Durham. He will address the 1000 supervisors expected to attend on the subject: "Laws Alone Cannot Improve Human Relations."

On Sunday at 12:30 over Westinghouse Station W.B.Z. he will participate in a forum on the subject: "The Challenge of Human Relations in The Business World Today."

TWO ARTICLES BY DR. KONVITZ APPEAR IN DISTINGUISHED ANTHOLOGY

"Art and Action", the tenth anniversary issue of "TWICE A YEAR", a semi-annual book of literature, the arts and civil liberties, contains two articles by Professor Milton R. Konvitz, of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University. As well as Dr. Konvitz' articles, the issue features essays by Richard Wright and Stephen Spender, a play by Jean Paul Sarte, an article by Andre Malraux, and speeches of George C. Marshall and Field Marshall J.C. Smuts. Editor of the volume is Mrs. Dorothy Norman.

In "Civil Liberties in the Supreme Court, 1946", Dr. Konvitz discusses the civil rights cases which came before this country's highest tribunal during 1946. Dr. Konvitz' second article, titled "The Legal Status of Americans of Negro Descent Since World War I", was, prior to publication, submitted to the United Nations Assembly by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as a memorandum on discrimination against American Negroes in American jurisprudence.

PROFESSOR CAMPBELL ATTENDS INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK STATE CITIZENS' COUNCIL
THIS WEEK IN CAZENOVIA

Professor Ralph Campbell, recently asked to serve on the Field Service Committee of the New York State Citizens Council, is in Cazenovia this week Tuesday through Saturday attending the Fourth Annual Institute of Community Leadership sponsored by the Council. The Council is concerned with the development of communities and community leadership.

PAUL YAGER AND ERNEST BULOW STUDY LABOR-MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

Paul Yager has been engaged this summer in studies in the field of collective bargaining on welfare funds. His thesis will be titled "Collective Bargaining on Welfare Funds." At the moment he is concentrating his research on the welfare and retirement fund of the United Mine Workers.

Ernest Bulow has spent the summer exploring "Employer-Employee Relations at the Todd Company in Rochester", and is writing his thesis on the subject.

HENRY MIMS DOES RESEARCH IN SOUTH

Henry Mims, graduate assistant, has returned from Durham, North Carolina, where he has been doing research on collective bargaining in the textile industry this summer.

PEOPLE ARE WONDERFUL

Professor Alpheus Smith, on vacation this past month, played tennis and went to the fairs with Stretcher Smith, his son, cleared out the jungle and cut down over 200 trees at "Bright Edges", his prospective new home off the Parkway extension near Hanshaw Road. The corporation of Smith and Son also caught bullheads in the Savage Pond which is part of the property.

Vivian Nicander, Editorial Assistant, finished her A.M. in English this summer at Cornell. Her thesis, "Will Rogers Wrote" is a fascinating analysis of the humor of the famous Oklahoma cowboy columnist. She will leave September 17th for her home in the New York City area where she will spend her vacation sailing along Long Island Sound. Her sailboat is a slim, trim sloop titled "Puff".

Ethylene Lewis, Secretary to Dr. Konvitz, left yesterday for a five-day spree in New York City with her husband Walter Lewis.

Madeline Grover, secretary to Dr. Emerson, wrote as follows to Barbara Gardiner from Alexandria Bay, Thousand Islands, N.Y. Sept. 1st:

"I'm sure having a nice vacation. We had a very pretty trip and cool and sunny weather. We're looking forward to the boat ride tomorrow and I'm anxious to see Canada where we'll stay tomorrow night. The next night we'll be in the Adirondacks, then home. Be seeing you."

A recent addition to the graduate assistant staff is Herbert Hubben, June graduate in Business Administration from Antioch. He is here to work for an M.S. in Collective Bargaining. He has already had considerable experience in the field, having worked for the N.L.R.B. for five months in Cleveland in 1943, and for 7 months in Baltimore as a Field Examiner in 1947. The interim between 1943 and '47 was devoted to duties as Personnel Sgt. Major with the Third Army in Germany, France, Belgium, and Czechoslovakia.

Robert Risley is working toward an M.S. and aims to specialize in some phase of social security. He came to the School in June from Union College. At Union, he was winner of the Hecht-Stiengut Award in Political Science.

Dora Faucott, back from the west coast, was impressed by the Grand Canyon, had a wonderful time with her uncle and aunt for 12 days in Whittier, California, and found especially exciting the Mexican town of Tijuana, just across the border from San Diego.

Professor Effey Riley of the Extension Division spent her vacation touring New England and Canada. She returned to I & L R Monday.

Jesse Carpenter has returned from Washington and points south. Completing the first draft of his book, he went fishing off the coast of North Carolina at Nags Head, a famous fishing center.

DR. GRAHAM C. TAYLOR, FIRST INDUSTRIAL PSYCHIATRY FELLOW, JOINS STAFF

Dr. Graham Taylor of the Allan Memorial Institute of Psychiatry of Montreal, first industrial psychiatry fellow at the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, arrived in Ithaca this week, accompanied by Mrs. Taylor and young daughter Caroline.

Dr. Taylor has been engaged doing post-graduate psychiatry at Allan Memorial as a resident assistant since February, 1946. Six months of this time he devoted to neurological rotation at the Montreal Neurological Institute. Prior to this, from September 1944 until February 1946, Dr. Taylor served in the Royal Navy.

A native of Canada, Taylor graduated from McGill University in 1939 and received his medical degree from McGill University Medical School in 1943.

MAN OF THE WEEK

(That you may better know other members of the faculty, staff and student body, each issue we present a thumbnail biography.)

To plan and direct a conference requires a unique combination of drive and diplomacy. To successfully serve as chairman of such a conference requires even more diplomacy and inexhaustible drive. An able chairman, sharp-minded, keen-witted, and fluent of speech, can transform a directionless hot-air exercise into a vital, pointed discussion. Professor N. Arnold Tolles, Director of the recent Conference on the Teaching of Economics, is such a chairman.

Professor Tolles started the practice of an annual conference on the teaching of economics in 1945 as Director of the Teaching Institute of Economics at the American University in Washington D.C. Convinced that teaching was the most important job a teacher should undertake, he sought means of improving teaching standards in institutions of higher learning. The three conferences which he has planned, projected, and captained have been major contributions to that educational objective.

Professor Tolles has an M.A. from Harvard and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. From 1928 to '35 he taught at Mt. Holyoke, Smith, then became Economist for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. He moved forward steadily to Assistant Director of the Wage and Hour Division, to Chief of the Working Conditions Branch, and in 1944 to the position of Acting Commissioner of Labor Statistics.

In 1945, he joined the staff of American University, and last fall, came here. The government's loss has been education's gain.

NEWS ITEMS APPEAR IN MANY NEWSPAPERS

In the past two months news releases from the School sent out by the Cornell News Bureau have appeared in the New York Times, the New York Herald-Tribune, the Albany Knickerbocker News, the Rochester Times-Union, the Utica Press, the Gloversville Leader-Republican, the Endicott Bulletin, the Syracuse Post-Standard, Labor News, the Syracuse Herald-Journal, the Buffalo Courier-Express, the Elmira Advertiser, and the Ithaca Journal. News notes have also gone out to Business, Screen and Film world, over the air waves of WHCU, and thanks to the efforts of Professor Earl Brooks, a short article titled "American Universities Offer Human Relations Studies" appeared in the August issue of the magazine "Your Human Relations". An article on the School has also been placed in the Winter issue of "Social Science."

NEWS RELEASES

60 EDUCATIONAL LEADERS MEET
FOR LABOR ECONOMICS CONFERENCE

Aug. 26, 1948

Leaders in the field of teaching labor economics discussed details of their work at their second annual conference at Cornell, opening Wednesday, and continuing through Tuesday, Aug. 31.

More than 60 college teachers are attending.

Professor Maurice Neufeld of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell, stated that two concepts must enter into the teaching of labor economics: 1. Students must appreciate political and moral aspects of economic and religious ideologies and 2. the administrative aspects of all of these problems need to be covered, for as society becomes more complex, administration also becomes more complex.

One of the main objectives in teaching labor economics in a liberal arts college, according to Prof. Richard A. Lester of the Industrial Relations Section of Princeton, is to overcome and break down the bias of students. "We must give students an understanding of labor economics as it affects public policy," Lester stated.

Prof. Frederick Harbison, executive officer of the Industrial Relations Center at the University of Chicago, discussed the objectives of teaching industrial relations to students. The first job, he said, was to shake students out of stereotyped, traditional thinking. Harbison said students must be made to understand the difference between major and minor problems in the field.

Adult education and an outline of the extension program of the host school were discussed by Prof. John M. Thurber. The present program at the School of Industrial and Labor Relations consists of four types of presentation: 1. lecture series, 2. school classes, 3. specialized projects and 4. conferences. "In our courses, we always try to find some degree of agreement between management and labor, and we try to enlarge those areas of mutual interest," Thurber said.

The Rev. Brother Justin of Manhattan College presented the Catholic viewpoint in teaching of labor economics. "We follow the encyclicals of the Pope", he told the group. He explained the college internship program at Manhattan College where students at Manhattan work in the field in summer as observer-participants for four points credit in the school.

Leaders discussed teaching devices Wednesday afternoon. Prof. Charles A. Myers of MIT said that results of a poll at MIT indicated most students felt role playing was valuable for them.

Prof. Jean McKelvey of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations said role playing was valuable because it was a substitute for direct experience which students quite often could not get otherwise. She said case studies could easily be covered in lectures, but in role playing students were participating and learning by doing.

METHODS OF TEACHING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND HUMAN RELATIONS
ARE EXPLAINED AT LABOR ECONOMICS CONFERENCE

Aug. 27, 1948

Ways in which students may be made aware of the internal politics and the left-right struggles in collective bargaining were discussed at the second annual conference on the teaching of labor economics at Cornell Thursday.

The 60 college teachers attending the Conference concluded that it is possible to give students a realistic picture of collective bargaining through the use of propaganda materials used by unions and companies, through teaching how unions work, and through the use of literature.

The Rev. James McGinley of St. Louis University elaborated upon another method of getting realism into studies in this field. Students at St. Louis picked particular industries, went out into the field and actually got a realistic description of jobs, job titles, what workers did, and tools used.

Prof. Philomena Marquardt of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell said that students at Cornell gained a more realistic understanding of the field through study of actual contracts collected from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The school has a microfilm collection of collective bargaining agreements from 1940-45.

PROFESSORS LESTER AND THURBER DISCUSS PRODUCTIVITY AT LABOR ECONOMICS CONFERENCE

Aug. 28, 1948

Prof. Richard A. Lester of Princeton told leaders attending a conference on the teaching of labor economics Friday at Cornell that he was impressed by the way good management could affect productivity.

Prof. Lester is one of the leading economists in the educational field, and is the author of "Economics of Labor".

The conference, beginning Wednesday and concluding next Tuesday, is sponsored by the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell in cooperation with the American Economic Association.

The speaker said that students normally feel that productivity is the responsibility of the worker. "Differences in equipment and in management also affect the output", he said. "We have altogether too mechanistic a view of management. Management has all the flexibility of human beings and the occasional failings of both management and labor are usually due to the failings of human beings."

The two unanswerable problems in economics today, according to Prof. Lester, are these: 1. how should productivity gains be shared, and 2. the effect of unions on productivity - whether they restrict or increase output.

Prof. John Thurber of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell, declared that the garment industry provides an excellent example of union and management working as a team to increase production. He praised the General Motors contract as an excellent example of industrial statesmanship. He thought that the 3-cent increase for yearly increases in productivity was a pioneering move. The move represents an effort by unions and management to share productivity gains.

Prof. Mortin Plotnik, Blackburn College, Carlinville, Ind., discussed teaching methods. He felt that the level of teaching in colleges was too often below standards required in high schools. "Too often", he said, "experts in research or in a particular field have made no study of how to get their material across. The discussion method is generally much more effective than the lecture method because in discussion the entire class participates". He thought it impossible to get across economic principles without first giving students a thorough background in economic history.

PROFESSORS HAWKINS AND McCONNELL SPEAK ON SOCIAL SECURITY TRENDS AT CONFERENCE

Leaders attending the conference on teaching of labor economics at Cornell, Aug. 25-31, discussed social security Saturday afternoon.

The conference is sponsored by the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, in cooperation with the American Economic Association. Prof. N. Arnold Tolles is conference chairman.

Prof. Everett Hawkins of Mt. Holyoke College, said that two trends in social security must be brought out in teaching: 1. A trend toward the development of private plans to supplement social security, and 2. A trend toward more extensive legislation in the field of social security outside the U.S., legislation such as the New Zealand Plan and the Beveridge Plan in Britain.

"Why social security came to the fore in 1935 is an interesting study," Professor Hawkins said. "One reason, besides the depression, was a 'crackpot' named Townsend," he declared. He felt that the "crackpots" should be studied briefly, and said it was the "crackpot" railway pension association which got the pension for railroad workers. These groups stirred up interest, promoted controversy, and drove the issue to the forefront of people's attention.

Prof. John McConnell of the Cornell school, said one vital question yet unanswered in social security was: "What are the implications of social security in a free enterprise economy?"

Maj. Stanley McLay of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces said the over-all objective of the Industrial College was to teach the industrial logistics necessary in case of an emergency. Logistics he defined as the process of supplying and maintaining the armed forces.

"The biggest problem today in industrial relations is the complete bias with which most people of both labor and management approach the problem of industrial relations," Major McLay said.

PROFESSORS KONVITZ AND SUMMERS DISCUSS TEACHING OF LABOR LAW

Aug. 31, 1948

Three basic objectives were listed by Prof. Clyde Summers of the College of Law, University of Toledo, in teaching labor law.

They are: 1. to teach students the use of legal advices as an approach to solving economic problems, 2. to teach students to examine labor legislation critically so they could recognize defects and undermining sections, and 3. to teach students the analytical job of interpreting the language.

Professor Summers spoke at Monday's session of the conference on teaching labor law at Cornell, held Aug. 25-31.

"Law is the bankruptcy court of industrial relations," he said. He told the group that the legal adviser to Walter Ruther said the most important thing in teaching labor law was to teach the student how to read a contract.

Prof. Milton Konvitz of the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell, discussed the eight law courses offered at the school. He declared that the school did not attempt to turn out lawyers, although many of the students went into law school.

Prof. William F. Spafford of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, discussed their course in management engineering. "The good personnel manager is neither a scholar or a salesman, but an expert in human engineering," he said.

Prof. Ralph Campbell of Cornell declared that there are two primary elements in a personnel program, even more important than security and other motivations. These are: 1. Personal development of individuals through training, education and a system of promotion, and 2. Democratic participation by all individuals in a corporation.

Prof. Everett Hawkins of Mt. Holyoke College affirmed Professor Campbell's comments. "While trade unionism has been based on conflict, certainly it is worthwhile always in our study of labor-management relations to stress those areas in which there is mutual agreement," Hawkins said.

DR. FAITH WILLIAMS CHIEF OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE,
EXPLAINS THE I.L.O.

Sept. 1, 1948

More teaching should be done on the international aspects of labor according to Dr. Faith Williams, chief of the Office of Foreign Labor of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Williams made the assertion at the final day's session on Tuesday, of the conference on teaching of labor economics, at Cornell, Aug. 25-31. The conference was sponsored by the School of Industrial and Labor Relations, in cooperation with the American Economic Association. Prof. N. Arnold Tolles of Cornell is chairman.

"The U.S. government," Dr. Williams continued, has been a member of the International Labor Organization since the middle 30's. It is an organization of governments, paid for by the governments. The U.S. government had ratified only 5 out of 70 resolutions adopted by the ILO, as international labor standards. We have the world's highest labor standards," she said, "and have taken the rather deplorable attitude that it is unnecessary for us to ratify any of the resolutions, even though our ratification would greatly strengthen the ILO."

The Rev. Brother Justin of Manhattan College described a Manhattan course on the European labor movement. "To understand the U.S. Labor Movement, you've got to understand its roots," Brother Justin said. "Our roots are in Europe and therefore we must have a knowledge of the two dynamic forces which have brought Europe to its present state of polarization - the Marxist forces and the Christian Democratic movement. The clashes of the market place, if they are to be resolved with understanding, need to be met with intelligence and a thorough knowledge of the history of labor."

PROF. TOLLES PRAISES WORK OF DISCUSSION LEADERS IN
CLOSING THE LABOR ECONOMICS CONFERENCE

Sept. 1, 1948

"Student development is more important than the teaching of any special set of facts," Professor N. Arnold Tolles declared in closing the Second Annual Conference on the Teaching of Labor Economics. At the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University, Professor Tolles was the Chairman of the twelve sessions of this one-week conference which ended this week.