

DEDICATION OF JAMES B. CAREY LIBRARY

IUE PRESENTATION SPEECH

Institute of Management and Labor Relations

Rutgers University

October 20, 1962

We have gathered here this morning to give the lie to an ancient but persistent superstition -- the superstition that there is no such thing as progress.

Only 70 years ago, in 1892, the Window Glass Workers Union and other labor organizations demanded that the City of Pittsburgh return to Andrew Carnegie a gift of \$1,000,000 which the steel baron had given to the city to build a free public library.

And elsewhere throughout the country trade unions conducted a boycott of Carnegie libraries on the grounds that they had been built with "blood money." Tens of thousands, perhaps scores of thousands, of workers refused to patronize Andrew Carnegie libraries or borrow Andrew Carnegie books.

That year, 1892, was, of course, the year of the infamous Homestead steel lockout and massacre which ended with seven union men dead and the union itself shattered.

Today, as I said, is proof that there has been progress. Seventy years ago only multi-millionaire industrial tycoons could establish public libraries. Today the trade unions which those tycoons fought and tried to destroy are building and endowing libraries on their own. In fact, they're probably endowing more libraries today than are the industrialists. That, indisputably, is progress.

And perhaps there is another note of progress that should be noted. The leader of the American labor movement in 1892, at the time

of the Homestead Massacre and during the period of the Carnegie Library boycott, was Samuel Gompers. Today Andrew Carnegie and Samuel Gompers lie not far apart from each other in a tiny cemetery behind an old Dutch Church in the Sleepy Hollow immortalized by Washington Irving at Tarrytown, New York.

We have come to the campus of Rutgers University today because this is an historic occasion for the labor movement of New Jersey and indeed for the labor movement of the country. It is equally an historic occasion for one of the truly outstanding leaders of the contemporary American labor movement, our good friend and colleague James B. Carey.

We have assembled, in fact, to see two dreams come true. For several decades the New Jersey Labor Movement and its leaders have dreamed of the great Labor Education Center that we dedicate on the Rutgers Campus today. The magnificent building, when finally completed, will have cost approximately \$700,000, but it is not the expense that is important to us. What is of significance -- proud significance -- is that the Center's construction has been completely financed by the labor movement of New Jersey and a number of national and international unions.

The Rutgers Labor Education Center is, therefore, the creation solely of trade unionism, the product of democratic labor's dreams and hopes, idealism and determination.

Within this Labor Education Center is our second dream come true: the James B. Carey Library. But this is the IUE's own creation; this is the handiwork of IUE District 4, of District 4 Local Unions, of the International and of IUE Local Unions elsewhere throughout the country.

The James B. Carey Library is the most meaningful -- and the most enduring -- tribute we could devise to honor the first and only President of our own organization, the International Union of Electrical,

Radio and Machine Workers, and a militant leader of the democratic labor movement for nearly 30 years.

Similarly, Brother Carey was the first and only Secretary-Treasurer of the Congress of Industrial Organizations during the nearly 20 years that preceded the CIO's merger with the AFL. He has served, as we know, as the strong right arm of John L. Lewis and Philip Murray not only in the burgeoning American labor movement but also as a representative of American unionism in the international labor movement and inter-governmental labor bodies.

It was James B. Carey, in the 1940s, who spearheaded the nationwide campaign against Communist unionism; a campaign that led directly to the near-total destruction of totalitarian influence not alone in the electrical, radio and machine industry but throughout the entire American labor movement.

It was James B. Carey's single-minded dedication, his self-sacrificing labors, his eloquence and inspiring militancy, fire and fervor that provided a rallying point not only for the successful war against Communism but also for the triumph of so many liberal and labor causes down through the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s.

It is James B. Carey's three decades, almost a generation, of faith in the future of economic, social and political democracy; his unflagging belief in the essential dignity of the individual, and his devotion to the ultimate brotherhood of man under God -- it is to these ideals and aspirations and to his struggles toward their attainment that the James B. Carey Library will pay living and perpetual tribute.

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Let me speak for a moment on what this Library will be, what its creators in the IUE and in the Rutgers Labor Education Center plan for it.

It is intended that the James B. Carey Library will serve a large variety of purposes not only for trade unions and their officials but also for scholars and historians of trade unionism.

To assist the labor movement the Library will collect all published materials of importance dealing with national and local unions. Included, of course, will be union newspapers and journals, officers' reports, convention proceedings, official and unofficial histories.

Equal attention will be given to such materials as: union economic studies and collective bargaining reports; manuals on union education programs; negotiating techniques; NLRB presentations and rulings; arbitration and court decisions.

To the extent that it can find the space the Library will be broadly comprehensive. Inscribed on the dome of the great rotunda of the Congressional Library is the quotation from the Roman writer Terence "Nothing human is foreign to me." I believe we will be able to say of this new Rutgers institution: "Nothing of labor or trade unionism is foreign to this Library."

Therefore, the Library will, of course, interest itself in all areas of activity that the labor movement itself is interested in, including civil rights, political action, problems of retirement and of aging, consumer problems, housing, health, international labor relations, and foreign policy. Documents on such subjects as these will be accumulated and made available to unionists and to scholars. The Library will also serve as a liaison channel with the vast resources of the Rutgers University Library, the State Library and other University and Municipal libraries throughout New Jersey.

The Library will offer an even wider public service by accepting requests by telephone or by letter for books, pamphlets, reports or

studies on particular subject matters. These requests will be answered not only by providing bibliographies of available materials but also the materials themselves.

The James B. Carey Library hopes, in the future, to develop into a center for union archives. That means that the Library would like to become the repository for all of a union's important historical and organizational documents or of microfilms of those documents. Emphasis is placed on this archival function of the Library for two reasons: first, it will make available to scholars and historians a tremendous storehouse of union information and data; and second, it will insure the preservation of documents that would either crumble or fade into oblivion unless microfilmed.

We hope, of course, that one of the first of our great international unions to use the Library as an archive, at least for a duplicate or microfilmed set of its records, will be the IUE-AFL-CIO.

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This, then, is the tribute we have devised, the living monument we have created as a testimonial to James B. Carey. This, we believe, and with deep conviction, is the finest tribute any man could wish for his life's work and attainments. We say the finest tribute because it is alive and constantly growing, forever serving and enriching the labor movement, incessantly serving and enriching scholarship, history and understanding.

John Steinbeck, the novelist who has expressed so many of the sentiments and convictions and experiences of our generation, has expressed our feelings about the meaning of books and libraries. Steinbeck has written:

"It is wonderful that even today, with all the competition of records, of radio, of television, of motion pictures, books have kept their precious character.

"A book is somehow sacred. A dictator can kill and maim people, can sink to any kind of tyranny and only be hated; but when books are burned the ultimate in tyranny has happened. This we cannot forgive.

"People automatically believe in books. This is strange but it is so. Messages come from behind the controlled and censored areas of the world and they do not ask for radios, for papers and pamphlets. They invariably ask for books. They believe in books when they believe nothing else."

For these and a host of other reasons -- reasons of affection, pride and esteem -- we of the IUE today present to James B. Carey the James B. Carey Library.