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Report on the First Denver Bar Institute for 1948-49

Dicta Editorial Board

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The Denver Bar Association's institute on Labor-Management Relations, Wages and Hours was held Saturday, December 4, in the Telephone auditorium. Some 75 to 100 attorneys availed themselves of the opportunity to learn more of the field of labor law, although Charles J. Beise, institute committee chairman, was compelled to open the institute with the announcement that Robert N. Denham, General Counsel for the National Labor Relations Board, had wired that he would be unable to attend.

With Wayne D. Williams of the institute committee acting as moderator, Sam Sherman of Denver, and William Berg, Jr. of the University of Colorado Law School made an able presentation of the law and practice of collective bargaining. Reid Williams, Regional Attorney for the U. S. Department of Labor, led the panel on wages and hours, with two Denver attorneys, Charles A. Graham and Richard W. Wright, presenting the viewpoints of labor and management. Elmer P. Cogburn sat as moderator for the wage-hour session.

Agreeing that along with taxation, labor law is the most important segment of the law for the practicing lawyer in the business world today, Messrs. Sherman and Berg in the first half of the program went on to point out to the assembled lawyers what were the best sources of information in the field, the "tools of the trade." They then launched into a discussion of collective bargaining rules and procedure under the present Labor-Management Relations act and the most important clauses in the resulting collective bargaining contract: wages, union security, financial responsibility, arbitration and other means of handling disputes. After Mr. Berg outlined the more probable areas of change in the present act in forthcoming Congress, the session was concluded by a short question period.

Reid Williams opened the second half of the program with a short history of the provisions and practice under the Fair Labor Standards Act and related statutes. He was then joined by Messrs. Wright and Graham in a discussion of the more controversial portions of the wage-hour act: the meaning of "the regular rate" under the Bay Ridge decision and the necessity of including bonuses and other premium payments in its computation; the meaning of "work week" before and since the Portal to Portal Act; and the exemptions permitted under the act because of the nature of the work of the individual even though engaged in a covered industry.

At the conclusion of the question period, a small luncheon was held for the speakers in the Mural Room at the Hotel Albany.

PAUL W. LEE, WM. A. BRYANS, III, CHARLES J. KELLY and EDGAR A. STANSFIELD have announced the formation of a partnership with offices at 1044 Gas and Electric Building, Denver.