

FROM THE EDITOR

Almost two years ago I heard John Lavin address a meeting of the Philadelphia chapter of the Industrial Relations Research Association. He spoke about the unionizing drive that had taken place at the Kaolin farm in nearby Chester County, Pennsylvania. I was so taken with the presentation that I asked him to prepare an article for publication in *JIER*. The first entry in this issue is that article. Janet Amighi and John Lavin tell the story of a decade-long union organizing drive, marked by strikes, unfair labor practice proceedings, and court cases that resulted in the unionization of several hundred mushroom workers in eastern Pennsylvania.

Economists from the days of Adam Smith have praised the merits of a free labor market. In our second entry, Daniel Mitchell and Christopher Erickson address questions concerning the adequacy of a free labor market to protect worker interests in a day when the economic and political power of labor unions is clearly declining.

The next article comes to us from the Netherlands. Herman Steensma and Coby Doreleijers compare the reactions of employment applicants to two different tools commonly used in screening applicants for positions: the employment interview and the work sample/situational test. Although the employment interview has been maligned in recent years, the authors point to certain unexpected values in the process.

Jeffrey Mello then turns our attention to the application of the Americans with Disabilities Act to health insurance. He contends that the lower courts are divided on the issue of whether insurance practices that “cap” or limit the benefits offered to employees who suffer from disabilities are covered by the ADA and that the Supreme Court has not adequately addressed this issue.

Our final entry consists of three articles devoted to a single issue of contemporary relevance. The question that is addressed in all three articles concerns whether public policy should require that part-time employees be provided with some version of the benefits that many employers provide to full time employees. In the lead article, offered in an abbreviated form in the summer of 2002 at the International Meeting of the Industrial Relations Research Association in

Washington, Nancy Segal argues in favor of a policy that eliminates the penalties historically associated with part-time work. In the first commentary article, Jeffrey Wenger generally supports her position while providing further information on the impact of the policy and the need for more options for part-time employees. Kathleen Pereles closes this discussion with a set of cautionary notes and narrower recommendations.

Charles J. Coleman
Editor