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Plan for Business-Labor Lunch Clubs Gets Big Hand

Suggestion By Philip Willkie To Ease Tension Meets With Overwhelming Support in Survey

By **GEORGE GALLUP**

Director, American Institute of Public Opinion

PRINCETON, N. J., Dec. 2—A proposal made by young Philip Willkie to relieve some of the tension between labor and business meets with widespread approval from the public in a coast-to-coast survey by the Institute.

Mr. Willkie, son of the late Wendell Willkie, and a member of the Indiana legislature, suggested using the business men's luncheon club formula. He would have labor - business clubs set up in industrial cities, with an equal number of businessmen and labor leaders meeting over the lunch table once a week to discuss their problems informally.



Gallup

To give this idea a public test, the Institute had interviewers put the following question to a cross-section of voters:

"It has been suggested that factory workers and other laboring men should form luncheon clubs with business men in cities throughout the United States to try to reach a better understanding of each

other's problems. Would you, yourself, favor or oppose this idea?"

Here is the vote:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Favor | 71% |
| Oppose | 17 |
| No opinion | 12 |

Members of labor unions who were questioned reacted favorably to the idea, their vote being 71 per cent for it, 18 per cent against and 11 per cent no opinion.

Business and professional persons also expressed approval by a ratio of more than 4 to 1.

The Willkie Plan

Mr. Willkie made his proposal in a syndicated article in August. He declared that labor-management strife in America was playing right into the hands of the Communists.

"Business and labor live on different sides of every town," he wrote. "The industrial con-

flict grows steadily worse. Labor and business meet only in conflict—around a bargaining table, during a strike, or in a fight for the control of a political or legislative body."

In describing his lunch club plan, Mr. Willkie said:

"One week, labor would have the program. The next week, business would have the program. As things now stand, business leaders keep talking to business people about the glories of 'free enterprise'. And labor leaders keep talking about the horrors of 'Taft-Hartley'. Neither side convinces anybody of anything.

"If labor would listen to business, business ought to be willing to listen to labor. Perhaps this service club formula of men breaking bread together can be put to use for the betterment of the American way of life."