MEMORIAL RESOLUTION FOR PROFESSOR MELVIN LURIE

Melvin Lurie, Professor of Economics and Director of the Master's Program in Industrial and Labor Relations (MILR) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, died on May 2, 1987 at the age of 63. He served on the UWM faculty for 21 years as a dedicated teacher, valued colleague and above all, a quiet but persistent humanitarian leader with unbending integrity. His death is a tremendous loss for all the friends, colleagues, students and professional associates who were given his intelligent care and concern.

A native of Cambridge, Massachusetts, he was raised in Boston where he graduated from Boston Latin School in 1940. Interrupted by World War II and the battle of Bulge, during which he strung artillery wire to the front lines, he returned to complete his B.A degree in economics at Pennsylvanial State University in 1948. An aspiring young man of high ideals, he went on to the University of Chicago to obtain his M.A. degree in economics in 1951. He initially worked for the U.S. Wage Stabilization Board; later having turned to teaching, he earned his Ph.D. at Chicago in 1958 with academic excellence in the field of labor economics. During his career, the principles developed in his doctoral dissertation naturally found their ways not only into major scholarly journals but into the classroom and the world beyond it, since they eventually led him to initiate the MILR program at UWM. He taught with distinction at the University of Connecticut (1954-60), the University of Rhode Island (1960-66), and as a visiting professor at Wesleyan University in Connecticut (1962-63), prior to coming to UWM in 1966.

Those of us who had the privilege of knowing Mel were impressed with his genuine interest in and commitment to the development of UWM as a major university and to the growth of the Department of Economics as a Ph.D. granting institution. As Department chair (1968-72, 1977-78), he led and oversaw the planning and implementation of a Ph.D. program, balanced in quantitative methods and institutional economics, that eventually earned the Department a national ranking. While he was deliberate in dispensing limited resources, he was tireless in securing needed resources for the Department and far-reaching in recruiting the faculty required for a quality program. Yet in addition to all of these, he always had time for counselling and assisting junior faculty members who valued his advice and friendship.

Melvin Lurie made other significant contributions to UWM. He served devotedly and effectively as Associate Dean (1972-76) of
Social Sciences in the College of Letters and Sciences during a time when both undergraduate and graduate programs grew substantially in number and quality. The most recent of his contributions is his dedicated service as the director (1983-87) of the MILR program at UWM. Before the program was finally approved by the Board of Regents of the UW System in 1983, he had worked and waited for 8 years with a doggedness and patience which reflected his personal character as well as his conviction. Today, not only has there been an influx of some 70 new graduate students but, more importantly, the addition of some eight new courses in an area of labor, industry and government never touched upon at UWM before. The MILR program is a cross-disciplinary curriculum that is providing a new and growing relationship between UWM and the labor-management communities in Milwaukee and in Wisconsin. Such are the fruits of the legacy that Mel left behind and would have us carry forward in the years to come.

To Mel, the students always came first. His office was open to students all day long and often in the evenings and on Saturdays. In his class, however, they learned quickly that he had the uncompromising standards of excellence indicative of the Chicago School of Economics. He was warm and soft-spoken in addressing students but challenged their views, evoked their critical thinking and opened their minds to new visions. It was then no simple coincidence that he was honored with the UWM Alumni Association Award for Teaching Excellence in December 1986.

Mel lives in our memory and perhaps, in every corner of our campus. He was a gentle and genial fellow with a wonderful sense of humor and a quick and curious mind. But he was a man of men, with a strong sense of right and wrong and a selfless commitment - no matter what it takes - to help those whom he cared for. He was a teacher's teacher and a genuine architect of what UWM represents. In his honor, and in recognition of his contributions, the Melvin Lurie MILR Scholarship has been established in the hope that it will one day bring some of the best and the brightest scholars to the six blocks he crossed for the past 21 years. Mel was a wonderful and outstanding person who will continue to live in those who benefited from his comfort and felt the satisfaction of his solicitude and companionship.

Swarnjit Arora
Dale Belman
Yoshio Niho
Tong Hun Lee