



# **WHO IS AL CHURCH?**

## **FOUNDER & FIRST DIRECTOR OF COUNCIL 65**

- Al Church began his career in the labor movement in 1947 as a member of the United Public Utilities Workers (UPW) of the CIO. He was later employed by Range/Duluth Joint Board to service unions.
- Al was the first individual hired by the newly formed Government & Civic Employees Organizing Committee (GCEOC) of the CIO. He worked in Minnesota for GCEOC as an International Representative until it merged with AFSCME in 1956.
- He worked as an International AFSCME Representative and served from 1958-1964 on AFSCME International's Executive Board.
- State highway & welfare units within AFSCME Council 6, and some city and county locals on the Iron Range formed the Minnesota Organizing Committee, an informal organization that existed until 1963.
- In 1963, AFSCME International chartered Minnesota Arrowhead District Council 65 with Al Church as its Director. At that time, the Council was primarily made up of city & county local unions on the Iron Range and half a dozen locals in NW Minnesota that had no servicing arrangements. This prompted AFSCME International to ask Al Church to provide service.
- In the 1960's, a group of locals in southern Minnesota, known as Council 71, needed service. A merger was negotiated making Council 65 a statewide organization of local government employees outside the Duluth/Metro area. Director Church now had four employees who traveled around the state servicing these local unions.
- Before PELRA was passed in 1971, Al Church was appointed to chair a committee of public employee representatives under the auspices of the Minnesota State Federation of Labor.
- In 1973, Church was appointed by AFSCME International President Jerry Wurf to serve on the International Judicial Panel. He remained on the panel after his retirement until his term expired in 1987, at the request of President McEntee.
- Minnesota Governor Rudy Perpich claimed he would not have been elected if not for Al.
- Church retired in 1985 after 38 years of service to the labor movement. He was then hired as a consultant to Council 65 for \$1.00 per year.
- Al Church died in 1992 at the age of 71.

**THE AL CHURCH SCHOLARSHIP WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE AFSCME COUNCIL 65 EXECUTIVE BOARD WHEN AL RETIRED IN 1985.**