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## Professor Merton Bernstein: Arbitrator

Robert Coulson

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# PROFESSOR MERTON BERNSTEIN: ARBITRATOR

ROBERT COULSON\*

There are a few hundred men and women in the United States who are asked, on a regular basis, to decide arbitration disputes between unions and employers. Leading labor arbitrators are members of the National Academy of Arbitrators. A few arbitrators also achieve prominence as scholars in labor-related fields of academic achievement. Merton Clay Bernstein has attained all of these goals.

He has decided many hundreds of arbitration cases, appointed by the American Arbitration Association or by government appointing agencies, or as an industry chairman. He has been an esteemed member of the National Academy of Arbitrators. He is a leading authority on Social Security and pension law.

His distinguished career as a legislative advisor and scholar, serving most recently as the Walter D. Coles Professor of Law at Washington University in St. Louis since 1975, provided an opportunity to write three of the most authoritative books on those complex subjects: *The Future of Private Pensions*;<sup>1</sup> *Private Dispute Settlement*;<sup>2</sup> and *Social Security: The System That Works*,<sup>3</sup> the latter with his wife, Joan Brodshaug Bernstein. At a time when the Social Security system was under attack, their book defended the equity and soundness of that public system, as compared with private pension systems.

Mert Bernstein has delivered many lectures and published many articles on pensions, labor relations and other issues facing the American worker. During his long career, he has explained, rationalized and commented on almost every aspect of the evolving work environment.

It has been my privilege to know Mert and Joan Bernstein, to admire their life and work together, to sit at their dinner table and share their broad interest in the wondrous matrix of American life.

In this brief note, I salute Merton Bernstein's career which has been

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\* President, American Arbitration Association.

1. MERTON C. BERNSTEIN, *THE FUTURE OF PRIVATE PENSIONS* (1964).
2. MERTON C. BERNSTEIN, *PRIVATE DISPUTE SETTLEMENT* (1968).
3. MERTON C. BERNSTEIN & JOAN B. BERNSTEIN, *SOCIAL SECURITY: THE SYSTEM THAT WORKS* (1988).

supportive to fairness and equity in the workplace, particularly with providing financial security to those American workers who are fortunate enough to enjoy their retirement years. As an arbitrator, a scholar, and an author, Professor Bernstein has given guidance to legislators and community leaders in the complexities of this most complex of all subjects.