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Recent Developments in Trade Unionism

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TRADE-UNIONISM

LABOR IN ENGLAND AND CONTINENTAL EUROPE.—
TENDENCIES TOWARD INDUSTRIALISM.—AMERICAN
LABOR.—AWAKENING AND CONSOLIDATION.—LABOR
BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE WORLD WAR.

by George Soule

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I. ENGLAND

England was the first country in the world to feel the industrial revolution, near the beginning of the nineteenth century, which brought in large factories, machine-production, and the control of manufacturing by owners of capital. The modern labor movement is therefore older in England than in any other country, and trade-unionism there has had a longer experience and more chances to grow big and powerful. The British labor movement is also in many respects more like the American labor movement than is that in any other country. On both these accounts, it is well to begin with a survey of recent tendencies in Great Britain, for experience has taught us that many developments in England have been repeated at some later date on this side of the water.

1. Organization of the Unskilled

Thirty years ago the English unions were for the most part exclusive societies of the highly skilled craftsmen, which almost never engaged in general strikes, and laid much stress on insurance and benefit funds. The unskilled day laborers were not organized, and machinery had not yet pro-

gressed far enough so that automatic processes had replaced the skilled mechanic with workers who are sometimes called "semi-skilled," due to the fact that they do not require a long period of apprenticeship to learn their trade.

Perhaps the greatest outstanding fact in the history of British labor during the last thirty years has been the organization of the great masses of the unskilled and semi-skilled. The dock workers, general laborers, transport workers of all sorts (including truckmen, street railway and busmen, expressmen, longshoremen, etc.) gas workers, track laborers on the railroads, the lower grades of miners, all these and others have become union members during the past generation, to say nothing of the great majority of semi-skilled in manufacturing industries. Their coming into the ranks of organized labor has led to many other changes. First and foremost, it has made the unions representative not merely of a small privileged class of workmen, but of the great majority of all workers in the nation.

2. *Organization of White-Collar Workers*

A much more recent tendency, coming to the fore during and after the war, has been the organization of clerical, office and professional workers of all sorts. Bookkeepers and stenographers, bank clerks, salespeople, teachers, newspaper men, employees of the government—such "black-coated"

workers who had always considered themselves part of the middle-class rather than of the working class, found that in the matter of wages and salaries they were as badly off as the unorganized workman, and that in fact their entire economic situation ranged them with labor rather than with their employers. They therefore adopted the same means to improve their position that had been successful with miners and machinists. They organized unions and joined the labor movement.

3. *Tendency Toward Industrialism*

With the increased organization of the unskilled, the character of the unions themselves began to change. A union of highly skilled operatives is naturally confined to a given craft, but there are not hard and fast boundaries between the jobs of the various unskilled and semi-skilled workers. They are likely to shift about from day to day and from month to month. Furthermore, the supply of the unskilled and semi-skilled is not limited in the same way as the supply of the highly skilled craftsman. Therefore the new unions had to cover entire industries rather than special occupations. When they struck, it did no good to call out a few men here and there; they had to call out *all* the transport workers or *all* the miners, as the case might be. The organization of the unskilled therefore led to the growth of industrial unionism as opposed to craft unionism.

The recent organization of the white-collar worker also assists the growth of industrial unionism, because it adds to the ranks of labor certain highly necessary persons who maintain the offices of the employer. If these persons remain at work during a strike, it is easier for the employer to keep his business going and to start it up again by the use of strike-breakers.

Another factor in the growth of industrial unionism has been the necessity of acting together on the part of established craft unions themselves. If in a certain metal factory there are machinists, iron moulders, toolmakers, metal polishers, and numerous other crafts, each organized in a separate union, it is folly for the machinists to go on strike alone for their demands, and for all the other crafts to keep at work. This is true because, in the first place, it is easier for the employer to defeat the machinists acting alone, and in the second place, if they win, the moulders are likely to go on strike the next month for their own demands, and so on, so that the work of the factory is disorganized for a longer period, and everybody suffers. Of course this lesson has been learned in the clothing industry, where all the workers in a factory co-operate in struggles against the employer. But if you imagine the cutters, the operators, and each of the other crafts organized in separate unions and striking at different times, with no joint board to govern their activities, you will imagine

the actual situation in the metal and many other industries as it was in England a few years ago and still exists to a large extent in the United States.

The natural result has been to bring about amalgamation and federation of various craft unions which had grown up in the same industry. In England, for instance, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, which originally included only machinists, now has combined with so many other unions that it covers virtually the whole metal industry. Other less recent examples of industrial organization are the National Union of Railwaymen, the Transport Workers' Federation, and the Miners' Federation. Both Transport Workers and Miners, although they are called "federations", are now practically single unions. Not one of these bodies, however, sprang up in a night, but they were the result of years of growth, in which the organization of the unskilled and semi-skilled, and the processes of amalgamation and federation of separate unions, all helped.

4. *The Triple Alliance*

Several years ago the National Union of Railwaymen, the Miners' Federation, and the Transport Workers' Federation formed what is popularly known as the Triple Alliance, for industrial action. This is an extension of the principle of industrial unionism to the inter-industrial field. Of

course coal is the basis of all British industry, for without coal the factories have no power. But the railroads transport the coal, and in doing so they must use coal in their locomotives. If there were a long miners' strike, therefore, the railroad men would be out of work, and if there were a long railroad strike, the miners would be out of work. The same applies to the transport workers, who are employed at the harbors and terminals. Therefore the three unions agreed to act in concert as much as possible. By doing so they could wield immense power, because if they should all go out at once, Great Britain would be paralyzed.

So far, there has never been a strike of the whole Triple Alliance. It has been used as a threat rather than as an actual weapon. When the railwaymen went on strike, the miners and transport workers said they would have to join forces with their comrades unless the strike was settled quickly, and their pressure helped to bring about a settlement. The same was true when the miners struck. While the Triple Alliance is a powerful threat, it has thus proved itself a little unwilling as a weapon. It is so powerful that the unions themselves have hesitated to use it, knowing that a general strike in all three industries would start a conflict the end of which nobody could predict. It might even end in a revolution. But a revolution cannot be started every few months to settle minor grievances. The Triple Alliance will not make good its threat until

there is a clear issue and one large enough to engage the support of the entire labor movement.

5. *Labor General Staff*

The last railway strike awakened labor to the fact that all unions are really involved in a great movement such as a strike in a basic industry. The Triple Alliance itself was not inclusive enough to represent the many workers who would suffer or benefit by a great conflict which might arise between labor on one side, and employers and government on the other, whenever the railwaymen and miners go out. A number of unions began to see that the whole labor movement would have to be better organized to control such matters.

As things stood, there were a great many separate unions, each one fighting its own battles in its own way, with nothing at the top to co-ordinate their action. The British Trades Union Congress, which is the central body of all British unions, had little executive power; it was merely a loose federation holding a convention once a year, much like the American Federation of Labor. The real power remained in the separate national unions in the different trades and industries. Yet the warfare between labor and the employers was going on all the time. The labor army was like an army made up of a lot of separate regiments and divisions, with no high command to plan the campaign. The result was that the labor army was in grave danger, be-

cause the employers were likely to pick a time and a place of attack very unfavorable to labor, provoke a conflict with some separate union, and then draw all the rest into the battle, only to defeat them. The only way to guard against this danger was to create a labor general staff, like the general staff of an army.

The general staff of an army does not consist of a few men who issue orders. It is like a brain: it gathers useful information of all kinds, studying the latest weapons and methods of warfare, the plans and equipment of the enemy, the country in which fighting is to be done. It regulates the various branches of the army so that the artillery and the infantry shall not be working at cross purposes, but shall help each other. In fact, it performs for the army most of the purposes that a brain and nervous system perform for the body. Upon the basis of the information it gathers, the commands are issued.

British labor is now engaged, therefore, in building up a general staff to furnish the various unions with the information and counsel which they need if they are to help each other properly, and are not to be caught napping by the employers. It will try to enable the whole labor movement to plan its campaigns intelligently, instead of fighting as a lot of separate units. Of course it is a long and difficult task to build up such a general staff, and we shall not see it in full operation for some time.

6. *The Council of Action*

In pressing emergencies, particularly of a political nature, British Labor could not wait for the slow building of a general staff. This was the case recently when Labor feared that the government was about to enter the war of aggression against Russia, and so start a new European conflict. A special convention of the unions was called, and a resolution was passed to call a nation-wide general strike if necessary to prevent armed intervention in behalf of Poland. In order to leave some body to put this action into effect in case the circumstances warranted, the Council of Action was formed. The result was that the government backed down, and announced that it did not intend to fight Russia. The Council of Action was formed for this purpose alone, but it is an interesting sign of British labor's earnestness in threatening direct action for a political purpose.

7. *The Shop Steward Movement*

During the war an interesting new movement arose from the rank and file. Many of the unions for years had had shop stewards, who performed part of the duties of the shop chairmen in the American clothing industry. That is, they saw that workers in the shops had union cards, paid their dues and assessments, etc. But during the war they took on new duties. The higher officials of the un-

ions were prevented from activity by the fact that the government had forbidden strikes, and had attached heavy penalties to fomenting or calling strikes. Nevertheless many grievances arose in the separate shops. The shop stewards began to go directly to the employers with these grievances.

The structure of many of the unions also prevented them from caring for these local grievances. A craft union of machinists, for instance, would not cover all the workmen in a single shop, but one of its locals might extend over a whole city, including machinists in a number of different shops. Such a local could not act easily in individual shops. A form of shop organization was necessary. Therefore the shop stewards of the various unions in a given shop would get together and form a shop committee, representing all the workmen in that establishment in their dealings with a single employer. Sometimes unofficial stewards were elected for this purpose.

The next move was for the shop committees in a given city or district to affiliate with each other, and in one or more cases strikes were conducted by such a group of committees. The movement gave a strong impetus to the tendency toward industrial unionism, and some of its leaders believed that it would result in a new type of unionism, which would be more revolutionary than the old. The movement has now died down, however, since in most cases the shop committees have been incor-

properly to render a genuine professional service. The intellectual can better aid the union by doing his own job well for the union than by trying to do the union's job for it.

THE INTELLECTUAL AND THE RANK AND FILE

Here again I must record dissent on the part of a number of intellectuals. The best way to understand the labor movement and to help it, they say, is first to become a manual worker and to join a union as a member of the rank and file.

A small number of intellectuals have done this with great profit to themselves and have subsequently been able to interpret labor's attitude with much more sympathy than they could otherwise have done. Manual labor is salutary for anybody, whether he is to work with the labor movement or not; and any intellectual worker will derive benefit from an occasional vacation from his desk and typewriter. As a preparation for professional service this course has much to recommend it.⁴

⁴In dealing with possibilities along these lines, Powers Hapgood, a Harvard graduate, who has spent the last few years as a miner in Pennsylvania and other states, and who more recently has done effective work as an organizer for the miners in Somerset County, has the following to say:

"I believe that the most important way for intellectuals to be of service to the labor movement is for them to become part of the group which they wish to help, to start life as manual workers, to take part in the affairs of their local unions, and to take their chances on being elected or appointed to administrative offices in their unions. This way, of course, applies largely to men and women who are not many years out of college and who have normal health and strength.

"It is true that men and women who have not risen from the ranks are in most unions neither eligible to handle nor capable of handling such important affairs of the unions as the formation of new policies, the making of contracts with employers, the managing of strikes, or the extension of the jurisdiction of the unions to unorganized fields. This does not mean, however, that college graduates are incapable of managing the basic functions of trade unionism if they go through the same training—though of less duration—as do all union officials. When once they rise to a position of leadership, they can be far more effective in the administration of their unions than if they performed professional services alone. Investigations, the preparation of briefs and statistics for arbitration cases, publicity and other services which intellectuals now render to the labor movement are important and necessary. Those trained along these lines can, however, function far more effectively as union officials, or at least as members of the rank and file of the labor movement, than if they did specific pieces of work as outsiders. They would also be more influential than the isolated intellectual in his advocacy of nationalization, consolidating the power of the A. F. of L., etc.

"A few years spent as a manual laborer in a mine, mill or factory is in no way wasted. In the first place, the experience of earning a living in industry and the opportunity which life like this gives for the understanding of human beings is the best kind of a post-graduate course. In the second place, and more important, it is from the rank and file of labor that progressive union policy most often comes. One or two active members of the rank and file of a local union, expressing their opinions at meetings or as delegates debating on the floor of district or national conventions, can do an immense amount of good, unappreciated it is true, but still worth while. And who can be more influential in arousing interest in workers' education, cooperative stores, labor papers, than active men working at their trades? The opportunity is there. Any man or woman with normal health can find a job after a little searching in mine, mill or factory and can serve the labor movement from the inside in many ways. Let him do his job, not worrying about 'leadership' and he will find plenty of things worth while doing."

and in fact all of the problems arising in the production of coal. A similar guild would manage the railroads. A central body of some sort, with delegates from all the various guilds, would take care of problems common to all industry. The state would merely attend to matters like education and foreign policy.

9. *Growth of the Labor Party*

For many years the Socialist movement in Great Britain was small and ineffectual. Organized labor as a whole was not behind it. It made little appeal to the average worker. Later on a group of Socialists formed the Independent Labor Party. Its platform was a socialist platform, its appeal was in every-day language. It set out with the avowed purpose of bringing the whole labor movement into politics as a unit.

After awhile it was successful, when on account of adverse court decisions and legislation the Trades Union Congress voted to establish the British Labor Party. The platform of the new party was not very radical at first, but the Independent Labor Party affiliated with it in order gradually to influence its policy. Little by little it has adopted socialist principles, until now it has a program that may be called socialist. It has even progressed beyond adherence to political action for political purposes, having urged the unions to enter upon a

general strike in the Russian and other questions. At the same time it has grown numerically, until now it is the largest party outside the Coalition government. It has already captured many local governments, and hopes before many years to have a majority in Parliament. Organized labor is almost solidly behind it, and it has long been supported by trade-union funds.

II. EUROPEAN TRADE-UNIONISM

The continental labor movement is not so similar to the American as is the English, and on account of the confusion and destruction of the war its recent tendencies have not been so stable and significant. In some countries its character has been affected by revolutions and the installation of nominally socialist governments, as well as by the formation of more radical, communist groups. In others it has been severely handicapped by reaction.

The most interesting developments have been in Germany and Italy. In Germany at present there is rapidly developing a councils movement similar to the British shop-steward movement. It is unofficial, and not encouraged by the trade-unions themselves. It consists of shop councils including all the workmen in a plant, regardless of the union or the political party to which they belong. These shop councils are in turn being affiliated by indus-

try and by district. The aim is to build up a united labor movement on the industrial and inter-industrial principle, which shall be all-inclusive on the industrial field.

In Italy the most striking development also was not planned by the officials. Threatened by a lock-out, the metal workers remained in the metal plants and continued to operate them. The movement spread to many other industries, until a large proportion of Italian factories were actually in the hands of the workers. Neither the government nor the employers attempted to throw out the workers by force, but a compromise was reached by which the factories were returned to their former owners on condition that a certain degree of "control" be given to the workers' committees. This control consisted largely of the right to inspect the employers' books. It is looked upon merely as a stepping stone to larger concessions in the future.

III. TRADE-UNIONISM IN AMERICA

In the United States the history of trade-unionism has been in many respects similar to that in England, but there have been other influences here which have delayed and modified its growth.

America was for many years a "new country"—that is, a country in which there was plenty of spare land and undeveloped natural resources such as forests, minerals, etc., waiting to be taken up

by the pioneer. There was no hereditary barrier between classes, and so it was easier for the workman to accumulate property and become an employer than in the older countries across the Atlantic. This fundamental factor delayed and restricted the development of a working-class consciousness for years, and still operates to a limited degree in our traditions.

Another influence affecting our labor movement has been the fact that a large proportion of our manual workers have always been immigrants unfamiliar with the language and customs of the country. It was naturally more difficult for such a vast mixture of races speaking different languages to unite in the Trade Union movement, and racial and national prejudices have cut across the natural unity of the working class. We had in this country, for instance, the same divergence between the craft unions of the highly skilled and the unorganized majority of unskilled that existed in England thirty years ago, but here this divergence was intensified by the prejudice of the native-born against the "foreigner."

Therefore, although capitalism has grown here even to vaster proportions than in England, and although a large proportion of our population are now permanently wage-workers, our trade-union movement is far behind that in England. This may be attributed in part, of course, to the conservative policies of leaders of the American Federation of

Labor, but we must not forget that the supremacy of these leaders has been in large measure due to the basic economic and social conditions.

1. Position of Labor Before the War

Several years before the Great War the American Labor Movement was in approximately the same situation that the British Labor Movement occupied thirty years ago, although in some respects it was even weaker. Most of its unions were organized on the craft basis, although there were exceptional industrial unions like the United Mine Workers and the Brewery Workers. The strongest unions were in the building trades and the printing trades. The coal-miners' organization was growing rapidly, but it was our only stronghold in basic industry. The four big railroad brotherhoods were still fighting for recognition—they consisted of the more skilled men such as the engineers, conductors, firemen and trainmen—and the other railroad employees had only a vestige of organization. The longshoremen were not yet strongly organized, although the teamsters had attained some strength. The foundations of the needle-trades unions had been laid in New York, but their greatest growth did not come until later. Most of the great basic industries were scarcely touched by the unions—that is, the industries such as metal mining, iron and steel, oil, textiles. Even the machinists' union was fighting for its life.

The principle of industrial unionism had long been preached in America, but it had not been put into successful practice. Eugene V. Debs had tried to found an industrial union of railway workers, fighting the old Brotherhoods, but his attempt was unsuccessful. The I. W. W. set up a new organization to compete with the entire A. F. of L., but it never gained the allegiance of any large proportion of the workers for long. Many smaller attempts to set up a new labor movement on the industrial principle have been made, but their chief tangible result is propaganda and discussion. Meanwhile the old-line unions were cautiously extending their strength little by little, and the whole trade-union movement was making inroads upon industry.

2. *Amalgamations*

Of course the system of craft unions gave rise to many jurisdictional disputes, when two or more unions would compete for the allegiance of the same group of workers. One result of these quarrels was a series of amalgamations among the unions concerned. We have a habit of calling the old-line unions craft unions, and yet so many amalgamations have taken place among them in the course of time that there is hardly one of them that is a strictly one-craft union in the old-fashioned sense. To illustrate this point we have only to look at the building trades. The carpenters, joiners and cabinet

makers are in the same union, the painters, decorators and paperhangers are grouped together, etc. Furthermore, each of the craft unions has shown an increasing tendency to organize the unskilled and semi-skilled with which it was most closely associated. Thus within the most conservative unions themselves the tendency toward industrialism has cropped up in the formation of what may be called inter-craft unions.

3. *Departments*

Another expression of the tendency toward industrial unionism in the A. F. of L. has been the formation of "Departments". Thus, the Railway Employees' department is a national body consisting of delegates from all the various A. F. of L. unions which have members working on the railroads. In negotiations with the government or the private employers about railroad matters it fulfills many of the duties of an industrial union covering the railway lines of the country. The unions concerned, however, retain the craft form of organization for use where, as in the case of the machinists, the membership extends into many other industries also. Other departments cover the building trades, the food trades, the mining trades, and the printing trades. Some of these departments are active and powerful, but others exist principally on paper.

4. *Growth of Unions During the War.*

After America's entrance into the war, many of the unions advanced materially both in numbers and power. This was particularly true on the railroads and in the war industries such as shipbuilding and munition manufacturing. The shortage of labor, caused by the demand for production, and the shutting off of immigration placed the workers in a temporarily advantageous position. The government saw that it was wise, instead of letting the unions take full advantage of the situation, to give them official recognition, and thus to substitute arbitration and conciliation for the strikes which would otherwise have resulted. The national Railway Administration set up a series of labor adjustment boards which made easy the organization of a vast number of railway employees who had previously been intimidated by hostile employers. The same process went on under the Shipping Board and the Emergency Fleet Corporation, under the War and Navy Departments, and under the War Labor Board, which had jurisdiction over disputes in many industries necessary to the war, and not covered by the other boards. The result was an immense strengthening of unions such as the various railway crafts, the machinists, the boiler-makers and iron shipbuilders, the longshoremen and transportation trades, and others.

5. *Growth of the Needle-Trades Unions*

Before 1910 the organization of all branches of the clothing trades was very weak. In that year the cloakmakers won their strike in New York, and the men's clothing workers won recognition of their shop committee in the shops of Hart, Schaffner and Marx in Chicago. After 1910 the various crafts making women's garments advanced rapidly, under the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. The progress of the men's clothing workers under the United Garment Workers was slow on account of the reactionary officials of the organization, but the formation of the progressive Amalgamated Clothing Workers in 1914 was the signal for their rapid advance also. Now these unions include a large majority of the workers in the clothing industry, having in a few years stepped to the forefront of the trade-union movement.

- Their rapid growth is especially significant, since it was not due to the favorable circumstances of the war so much as to their energetic practice of many of the principles of industrial unionism. The formation of the Needle Trades Federation, to include not only these two unions but also the Journeymen Tailors, the Cloth Hat and Cap Makers, and the Furriers, will if successful be another big step in the direction of their goal.

6. *Federations and Shop Committees*

Outside of the needle trades, a shop committee movement similar to the English shop steward movement began years ago in the United States. Its beginning was the "system federation" in the shop departments of the railroads. The system federation extends over the lines of a single railroad system. It consists of delegates from the various craft unions working in the shops of that system. Such bodies of delegates conducted strikes and negotiations with the common employer of the various groups concerned, its first big success being on the Chicago and Northwestern. This idea is of course the same as the shop committee idea, applied to a railroad system.

During the war shop committees, composed of delegates from the various craft unions concerned, were set up for local adjustment in the ship yards, the arsenals and navy yards, and many of the private munitions plants. These shop committees were recognized by the unions, and worked hand in hand with the national "departments" of the American Federation of Labor. They greatly strengthened the tendency towards industrial unionism.

7. *Inter-Craft Organization Committees*

Just as a shop committee made up of delegates from various craft unions may apply industrial un-

ionism in the shop, so a similar committee, formed for organizing non-union workers, may employ some of the methods of industrial unionism in recruiting new members and conducting a strike. It was William Z. Foster who first used this idea, in order to gain the advantage of industrial action without at the same time having to fight the old craft unions who claimed jurisdiction over the workers to be organized.

The first such committee was formed to organize the Chicago stockyard workers, with Foster as Secretary, and it succeeded for the first time in forming these low-paid workers into unions, and winning recognition for them. While each worker joined the union of his particular craft, a joint council of all the unions governed industrial action.

It was precisely this plan which Foster adopted to organize the steel industry; in this case the organizing committee being formed of delegates from twenty-four separate unions. A uniform initiation fee was adopted, and the organizing campaign was carried on much as if it were the work of one great industrial union. The result was the successful organization of a majority of the steel workers, and the first general strike in the history of the American steel industry—a strike in which greater numbers were involved than in any previous strike in the country. Although the strike was unsuccessful and the A. F. of L. allowed the organization to fall to pieces, Foster claims that the effort came so

much nearer to success than any other previously made in the steel industry that it was justified. The strike might have been lost under the best conceivable form of organization.

8. *Workers' Control*

As in the British shop-steward movement, our shop committees have led to various steps toward partial "workers' control." This begins with such simple matters as the adjustment of piece rates, it goes on into questions of management such as the improvement of processes and the introduction of standards of production under joint control of the union and the employer, and in one case it went so far as to concern itself with the selling of goods and market conditions. This occurred in the government arsenal at Rock Island, Illinois. Here the workmen wanted to avoid the unemployment which would result from the return of the arsenal to a peace basis, and so they urged its use for the manufacture of commercial products useful in peace times. Their shop committee was working with the management in transforming the plant for this purpose, but the reaction which followed the war, combined with the naturally conservative attitude of the army officers in charge, caused the government to abolish the shop committee plan and so kill this interesting experiment.

Another plan for partial workers' control on a much wider scale was proposed in the Plumb Plan

for the management of the railroads. The Plumb Plan is significant not because it is necessarily the best possible plan for the railway industry, but because for the first time it introduced the idea of workers' control on a large scale into the more conservative sections of the labor movement, such as the old railroad brotherhoods and the A. F. of L. It calls for government ownership of the roads, and for their management by a board composed of three representatives of the classified (mostly manual) workers, three representatives of the executive and technical staffs, and three representatives of the government. An elaborate system was worked out for the distribution of the surplus earnings among those interested.

9. *Labor Education*

Education of workers under the auspices of the unions themselves has grown very rapidly within the last few years. This movement was started by the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, which established classes and lectures in New York and elsewhere. It was soon taken up by the Amalgamated and other unions, which in 1918 established the United Labor Education Committee. Last year the Amalgamated established its own educational department on a national scale, and work is being carried on all over the country. The Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor now has an educational committee, and Trade-Union Colleges,

using some of the best university teachers, have been set up in Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Minneapolis, Washington and Seattle.

These scattered labor education experimental activities recently met in national conference and a Workers' Education Bureau of America was launched for the purpose of co-ordination and mutual help in the important field of labor education.

10. *Labor Press*

Since the war the labor press has grown rapidly in spite of unfavorable conditions, and a number of newspapers under labor auspices have been set up in various parts of the country. These papers now have their own news service, the Federated Press, which has recently established European connections, and is developing plans for enlarging its activities in the United States. The workers everywhere are awaking to the necessity of having sources of information upon which they can depend.

11. *Research and Publicity*

Labor is also realizing its need for accurate information on its problems. It needs studies of prices and of wages for arbitration proceedings, and it needs studies of industry in laying its plans and developing its tactics. This has given rise to an in-

creased attention to economic and other labor research, and to publicity based upon the facts developed. The railway unions now have a research staff of their own, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the International Ladies' Garment Workers have research departments, and independent research and publicity agencies have been formed to serve unions.

12. Organization of White-Collar Workers

The organization of "white-collar workers" has not proceeded as rapidly in this country as in England, but it has made decided progress. There are unions of teachers, bookkeepers, federal employees, clerical workers on the railroads, journalists, and actors. Some of these are extremely successful, although others are still in the early stages of their work.

13. Labor in Politics

The Socialist Party has succeeded in gaining the support of part of the labor movement, but neither this nor any of the other radical parties have been able to get the official support of anything like a majority of the unions. A new attempt to induce the unions to enter upon independent political action was made recently by the Labor Party of the United States, subsequently amalgamated with other groups to form the Farmer-Labor

Party. Although it has been in existence only a short time, it has been endorsed by many city central bodies, by twelve state federations of labor, and by two international unions. It has not yet come near capturing the A. F. of L. as a whole, however. Its total vote in the Presidential elections of 1920 was a little more than half that of the Socialist Party, although in localities where it succeeded in establishing itself it registered some striking totals. In the state of Washington, for instance, where the strong and radical labor movement was heartily behind it, its vote was more than half that of the Republicans, and was twice as large as the vote of the Democrats. One of its chief difficulties in the campaign was lack of funds to carry on its organization and publicity work, and such funds will not be available in sufficient quantities unless the great unions can be won over to its support.

14. International Federations

In addition to the Socialist and Communist Internationals, there has for some years been an International Federation of Trade Unions, devoting attention to union affairs. The American Federation of Labor has been affiliated with it until 1920, when Samuel Gompers withdrew on the ground that it was "too radical," because it urged direct action to prevent war and blockade against Soviet Russia. Strangely enough, while Gompers attacked it for being too radical, the Third, or Communist

International attacked it for being too conservative. Its former President, Appleton of the British unions, was conservative and took the same stand as Gompers. Its new President, J. M. Thomas of the British National Union of Railwaymen, is often considered conservative in Great Britain, but in this country he would doubtless be called a Bo'shevik because he supports the Labor Party, believes in nationalization of the mines and railroads, and supports the International Federation in its threat of direct action to prevent a new war. Most of the important trade union movements of Europe are affiliated with this International.

On the other hand, the Third or Communist International with headquarters at Moscow, Russia, has called into being another International Council of Trade and Labor Unions. This red International of Trade-Unionism has gained the support of a number of labor bodies even in this country, as reported in the press.

Besides these general Internationals of the unions, there are also international federations for specific industries, whose interests spread beyond the boundaries of one country. The seamen, for instance, held a conference last summer in Genoa, to decide important questions about their trade, and the miners had a convention in Switzerland, where they resolved, among other things, to help each other in the movement to nationalize the mines of the various countries. The United Mine

Workers of America alone refrained from taking an active part in this convention.

In Copenhagen an international convention of clothing workers was held, in which the Amalgamated and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union participated. It considered questions of importance to the industry, including immigration. One of the projects taken up was the distribution of accurate information regarding the industrial conditions in the various countries, so that tailors would not flock to places where no employment was to be obtained.

15. *Present Tendencies*

What the future has in store for the trade union movement in the United States is merely a matter of conjecture, but many believe that a crisis is at hand in which it may see rapid changes. The open-shop campaign of the employers, combined with the reactionary national administration, may bring to a head tendencies which have been gathering force now for some years. It is probable, at least, that the trend toward industrial unionism will become more pronounced, and that a more aggressive leadership will before many years succeed the present regime of the American Federation of Labor. In addition to this, some look for a drift toward independent political action, toward growth of the co-operative movement, or toward an increase of

workers' control in industry. The only certainty is that the unions are facing a bitter warfare forced upon them by the employers, and we all know that under conditions of warfare drastic changes are likely to occur.

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